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COLLEGE ENGLISH

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"Her Infinite Variety"

FRANCIS LUDLOW¹

IT WOULD be as easy to pack modern women away in little labeled boxes as it is to divide the heroines of contemporary fiction into precise categories. Women—whether real or imaginary—escape all classifications. Tag your Phyllis or Betty as a sober and industrious damsel with no use for empty frivolity, and you find that she has stood in line for hours to see Frank Sinatra or Van Johnson. Dismiss her as a flibbertigibbet, and she reveals that her life is consecrated to missionary work in China. She is consistent in one thing only: she can't stand fences!

With woman herself so elusive and intransigent, it is obvious that her black-and-white reflection will be equally untrammelled. The author's objective is to portray individuals; the better the writer, therefore, the less his characters fit into convenient pigeonholes. Such groupings must be approximations at best. They can serve only to show general directions. It is for this reason that very little evidence can be offered in support of much literary compass-reading; the evidence exists, but it is so scattered and so imponderable as to defy compilation.

There is, for instance, a marked physical change in today's heroine, just as

there is a measurable difference between the woman of 1945 and her mother and grandmother. Shoe-dealers tell us that daughter's feet are bigger than mother's were, presumably because daughter does more running about than her mother ever did. It is harder to account for other anatomical changes unless wishful thinking is, in spite of precept, potent enough to add a cubit to our stature. Modern girls are pretty generally taller than their mothers and have bigger waists and smaller hips. The modern heroine, too, has become tall and slender. This is especially true in mystery stories and other books in which character is less important than plot. She almost always has "long slender legs." She is about five feet seven inches in height, weighs about one hundred and twenty-eight pounds, has a twenty-five-inch waist and thirty-five-inch bust and hips. If you question these figures, take your tape measure to the nearest rental library.

There has been an equally definite mental development in the heroine of today. It is not that her mind is any quicker or better than her mother's; she merely makes better use of it. Though it would be exceedingly difficult to prove this assertion, it should be less difficult

¹ Editor of the *Retail Bookseller*.

to convince you that it is true. Think back to the novels of thirty years ago. In 1915 *The Turmoil*, by Booth Tarkington, was the general favorite, with Gene Stratton Porter, Eleanor H. Porter (the *Pollyanna* Porter), Mary Roberts Rinehart, William J. Locke, and Zane Grey all represented on the best-seller list. How many of their heroines, do you suppose, bothered their pretty little heads about politics or economics? Can you imagine Pollyanna brooding over the question of full employment? We were then on the brink of war, even though many of us did not know it, but it is inconceivable that any heroine of the day had the faintest conception of the tangled international affairs underlying the European conflict. It was not until the war was all over that women—in books—began to think.

In 1920 American women voted for the first time. In 1921 Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street* introduced an idealistic young thing passionately interested in civic betterment. Carol Kennicott was far from being a profound or original thinker, but she did busy the little gray cells with something besides parties and domestic problems. There was no overnight change in the intellectual level of our heroines, even after Carol Kennicott, but *Main Street* was an indication of better things to come. Other writers, less popular than Sinclair Lewis, had been at work: Willa Cather, Sherwood Anderson, Theodore Dreiser, and a few more. Their novels seldom, if ever, reached the year's best-seller list, but the influence of those books was felt in other books. At any rate, the heroine of 1945 is very much aware of the world about her. She is, as a matter of fact, a bit of a radical. She grows hot over injustice to the working man; she is impatient with race prej-

udice; she knows just what should be done to cure the world's ills.

The heroine of fiction, in other words, has followed her flesh-and-blood sister, in thought as in figure. The girls and women of 1945 are at least thirty years beyond the women of 1915 in world consciousness. Women have entered public life with so much energy and so much good sense that it was inevitable that they should show some of the same intellectual powers in any books which really tried to mirror life.

It was a long and slow climb from the woman who left such matters to the dominant male to the woman who seems ready to relegate the male to the background. The twenties have been dubbed the "Jazz Age," for which F. Scott Fitzgerald is conceded to have been the spokesman. *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, and a host of short stories glorified an adolescent girl who seemed to have no existence at all outside ballrooms and roadsters. She was lovely—a reckless, self-indulgent, wilful brat, but gay and gallant. She was hotheaded and warmhearted. She was selfish and openhanded. She flouted every convention but held her own code inviolate.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels never reached the year's best-seller list (Zane Grey's *The Man of the Forest* was the nation's favorite reading in 1920, when *This Side of Paradise* was published). They have come to represent for us, however, the period of short skirts and bobbed hair and the drawings of John Held, Jr. It was the period of reaction from war, the day of the bootlegger and the gangster, of women's smoking, of the revolt against restraint. It turned all too many of the young men of the time into neurotics and alcoholics,

though it was not until the thirties and forties that these gay blades began to pay for their fun.

The thirties, roughly speaking, brought the depression and a return to sobriety, but the best-sellers of the thirties show little direct interest in the economic upheaval. Probably the outstanding book about the depression itself was Hans Fallada's *Little Man, What Now?* Bunny, heroine of this German novel, was tender, earthy, and real—perhaps too real and too much a product of the times to incite imitation in America. Thousands of American wives were bearing worry and want as bravely as Bunny did; they gave their anxious husbands loving understanding. But they preferred to escape everyday life through Pearl Buck's story of a Chinese wife, *The Good Earth*, and through the forthright, homespun women of Bess Streeter Aldrich's *A Lantern in Her Hand*, *A White Bird Flying*, and *Miss Bishop*. These imaginary women led industrious, devoted lives; like Bunny, they met hardships, made sacrifices, but these hardships and sacrifices were those of a bygone day—not like the grim problems of the depression. Readers who wished more colorful novels could live in the world of Edna Ferber and her knowledgeable and rather brightly complacent women, like Magnolia and Kim Ravenal of *Showboat*. In spite of the increasingly high quality of the best-seller lists of the period (the unabashed time-killers were mostly gone), the early thirties were marked by a desire to avoid reality rather than any attempt to solve its problems.

Gone with the Wind, published in 1936, emphasized this need for anything but the truth. Margaret Mitchell, by intent or by chance, offered harassed readers the perfect antidote to thought: a glamorous heroine and the South of a thou-

sand romantic traditions. It made no difference that Scarlett O'Hara was the composite of all headstrong southern belles, with little more reality than the paper dolls so popular with our daughters. *Gone with the Wind* became the most successful of all modern novels. A part of this success was no doubt due to the irrelevant commercial rivalry of two or three great New York department stores which sold it at a fraction of its official price and thus created a bargain-sale demand. A greater part was due to its wealth of incident and its profusion of characters already proved "good theater" in many a book. Still another part of its success, however, was the result of its very timely proffer of translation from a gray present to a gaudy past, from a job-wearied husband to the dashing Rhett Butler.

It is true that many thoughtful novels were written during the thirties. John Steinbeck, Thomas Wolfe, John P. Marquand, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and Sholem Asch were all represented on the best-seller lists. But for the first five years after our economic house of cards came tumbling down, America's most popular novels were *Cimarron*, Edna Ferber's romantic novel of pioneer days in Oklahoma; *The Good Earth*, Pearl Buck's story of a Chinese family; *Anthony Adverse*, the jumbo adventure tale by Hervey Allen; and *Green Light*, Lloyd Douglas' inspirational sermon-in-fiction-form. Not one of these books can be called a realistic interpretation of modern American life. Not one of them has anything to do with the world-shaking depression.

In a predominantly romantic literature it was inevitable that the leading role should be given to an idealized woman. A survey of the two postwar decades shows that authors put their

heroines on golden pedestals. There *were* unchivalrous brutes who flouted the unwritten law, but they were few.

The heroine of the chosen fiction up to the twenties, and to some extent during the thirties as well, was sweet and wholesome. Men, in theory at least, did not marry the girl of strong sexual attraction; they made love to the hussy but married the lass of nunlike innocence. This innocence—or ignorance—was an accepted convention in fiction, and no stumbling block so long as novels depended upon plot rather than upon character for interest. Some daring authors put bad or “sordid” women into their novels—Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* was published in 1900 and his *Jennie Gerhardt* in 1911—but these books were read by the sensation-seekers and the “radicals” rather than by the general public. Edith Wharton had written a book about a reckless woman, *The House of Mirth*, as early as 1905; yet in *The Age of Innocence*, published in 1920, the hero was not allowed to leave his Diana-like wife for the exotic Countess Olenska. In spite of Ellen Glasgow’s valiant effort in *Barren Ground* and other novels to take the southern heroine out of the magnolia-scented moonlight, Margaret Mitchell was able to put her back into it again. For every thousand people who read Willa Cather’s *A Lost Lady* or Radclyffe Hall’s *The Well of Loneliness* or Louis Bromfield’s *The Green Bay Tree*, there were several thousand who read Gene Stratton Porter’s *Her Father’s Daughter* or Temple Bailey’s *The Dim Lantern*. The two most popular novels published between 1880 (*Ben Hur*) and 1936 (*Gone with the Wind*) were *Freckles* and *A Girl of the Limberlost*. These two novels have sold almost two million copies apiece, more even than *Pollyanna*. The most popular novel of the twenties,

E. M. Hull’s *The Sheik*, was sensational in plot, but its heroine was definitely a lady, and the hero did marry her eventually.

Even today, in spite of the tremendous sales of such books as *Earth and High Heaven* and *Forever Amber*, it is quite likely that complete statistics would prove that the sweet young girl is still exceedingly popular. Though Temple Bailey and Grace Livingston Hill do not rival the sales of more realistic writers, they do turn out book after book, each about a damsel as pure as an angel and each a very popular book with the vast public that buys low-priced reprints. And there are many authors who follow the pattern of the sugary romance. Historical novels, love stories, and western stories, by and large, continue the convention of the dew-fresh heroine. Throughout the twenties and thirties, however, there were more and more rebels against the pattern of perfection.

No doubt this girl who blushed if you even mentioned bees and flowers helped materially to produce her successor. She was so impossibly good, and so silly, that she undoubtedly exasperated many an author. Louis Joseph Vance once wrote an adventure story called *Wings of the Morning* which showed to what lengths absurd delicacy could be carried. His heroine had been besieged with the hero on a small rock shelf, where they stayed for a couple of days or so, yet when she had to appear before the gentleman in sailor’s breeches she bridled coyly. William J. Locke had one of his heroes give as a reason for marriage: “She’s so unbearably good that I want to marry her and get rid of her virtues one by one.” The authors of the thirties started to strip the heroine of her virtues in something the same spirit. The one most striking trend in the woman of

contemporary fiction is her gradual shattering of moral restraints.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's teen-age girls smoked and drank and indulged in amorous dalliance with a great air of bravado; they defied conventions. Iris March, of Arlen's *The Green Hat*, was older and much more sophisticated than F. Scott Fitzgerald's somewhat naïve rebels; she took her fun where she found it, simply because it was fun. She recognized sin but preferred it. Floyd Dell's Janet March, of the book which bore her name, was so morally lawless that the book was for some years withdrawn from sale. She was one of the first disquieting evidences of a fictional heroine, presumably a girl of a good family and with a proper background, who refused to admit the existence of moral turpitude. Maxwell Bodenheim's Jessica, of *Replenishing Jessica*, had the shameless sex-hunger of a mal-kin. Both Janet and Jessica were extraordinary, but Christopher Morley followed them up with *Kitty Foyle*. Kitty was not extraordinary; she was a business girl, the kind of girl who goes to high school and goes from there to an office, so that her easy acceptance of promiscuity is even more significant than the outlawry of the female libertines. By her very lack of distinction or originality, Kitty made it plain that her conduct was not exceptional, that she was merely one of a multitude with the same ideas. We deprecate the derelictions of a Madame Bovary or a Jessica, but we are not alarmed by anything so far from our own experience. Kitty Foyle, however, was the kind of girl who throngs the streets of every city at lunchtime and at five o'clock.

One of the most popular books of 1944, *Earth and High Heaven*, by Gwethalyn Graham, illustrates this change in moral standards in its present stage—a

change perhaps the more important because it has caused so little comment or alarm. *Earth and High Heaven* deals with the love of a Canadian girl of a fine English family for a brilliant young Jew. Erica Drake had been brought up with all the traditional respect for the decencies. When she met Marc Reiser and fell in love with him, she proved her caste-consciousness by the very vehemence of her protestations that Marc's religion made no difference to her. That it did make a difference and that Marc was aware of the fact are shown by Marc's own hesitation. If Erica had taken marriage for granted, it is likely that Marc would have accepted it calmly. Her tears and wild defiance served only to upset her lover. The important point, however, is that this girl, who was so consciously breaking her tribal commandments by contemplating marriage to a Jew, apparently had no inhibitions at all about spending weekends with him. Many of their most solemn discussions were held in bed.

Here, then, is the complete negation of the Seventh Commandment. Look over the recent novels, and you will see how casually the heroine of today regards a surrender that would have barred her from nice books a generation or so ago and would certainly have dashed her hopes of a happy ending. Stella Witowski, of Lester Cohen's *Coming Home*; Sandra Echols, of Evelyn West's *Animal Fair*; Nina Gilmore, of Zelda Popkin's *The Journey Home*; Carla Dehn, of James Ramsey Ullman's *The White Tower*; Lena May, of Ben Ames Williams' *It's a Free Country*—and a host of others—all give themselves to their lovers with little or no hesitation. These are not outlaws, remember; they are all girls the writers expect us to admire.

Even the historical romance, long as

free of illicit passion as the western story (where purity is making its last stand) and the mystery and the sentimental love story, has introduced heroines of none-too-rigid virtue. That amazingly successful epic of hack and thrust, Samuel Shellabarger's *Captain from Castile*, probably won much of its acclaim because of Catana, the tavern wench who followed her soldier to Mexico (and became the most real and likable person in the book). Tavern wenches have frequently followed their paramours, of course, but in this instance Pedro de Vargas ultimately married his mistress instead of the high-born lady at home. This certainly would never have happened in the novels of George Barr McCutcheon or Jeffery Farnol (or in real life, for that matter). Pedro married Catana because Samuel Shellabarger was well aware that for the modern reader Catana's courage and loyalty were more important than her virtue.

Twenty or thirty years ago sexual dereliction was considered so important that many a novel made a fall from grace its *raison d'être*; Kathleen Norris has enjoyed a considerable success by getting her heroines seduced and then discussing whether or not they should tell their prospective husbands. All. Today's writers are less concerned about their leading lady's chastity than they are about her meager spirit, her selfishness, her jealousy, her greed. There have been a rather surprising number of successful novels of recent years that have taken out-and-out monsters for their chief female characters—partly, perhaps, in rebellion against insipid saintliness and partly as one expression of the modern urge toward ruthless analysis.

In 1937 Mari Sandoz wrote a novel called *Slogum House*. It was so powerful and so pungent that reviewers expected

its author to be a two-gun western wild woman instead of the slender and drily humorous young lady Miss Sandoz turned out to be. *Slogum House* can hardly be called an example of anything; it was too vigorous to fit into any classification or obey any rules. Its chief character, Gulla Slogum, was so savagely vicious that she would have been something out of a horror story if she had not been made so unmistakably alive. Gulla made a slave of her husband, prostitutes of her daughters, thieves and murderers of her sons. She was a product of frontier days—more than one old-timer has testified to her existence—but fortunately she was not typical then, and she was so terrifying that more recent monster-women have been closer to normal experience.

Rebecca, by Daphne du Maurier, published in 1939, was a remarkably adroit portrait of a beautiful and charming woman who was also wanton and selfish. To provide her novel with a surprise ending, however, Miss du Maurier hid this fact until the very end of the book; the technique was that of the mystery-story rather than that of a character study. The result was that *Rebecca* was a little shadowy.

In 1941 Ben Ames Williams, who had written a number of mysteries and other escape novels, published *The Strange Woman*, intended as another picture of a period. He soon found that Jenny Hager, a baby at the opening of the book, was dominating him as cleverly as she cozened the other men in her life. In spite of a slight squint, Jenny was extremely attractive to men, possibly because of her own insatiable passions. She ruined her father, her husband, her lovers. She could be irresistibly sweet, she had an inflexible determination, and she was utterly unscrupulous. In her own

way she was as much a monster as Gulla, of *Slogum House*; but apparently the public did not think so because *The Strange Woman* is still read. Over half-a-million copies of the book have been sold.

Having tried his hand at less successful material in the meantime, Ben Ames Williams did another monster-woman novel in 1944, *Leave Her to Heaven*. Whether or not this second attempt equalled *The Strange Woman* in literary merit, it far surpassed it in popularity. By the end of 1944, some seven hundred and fifty thousand copies had been sold, and it is still a favorite. Ellen Berent, heroine of *Leave Her to Heaven*, lacked the piratical drive of Jenny Hager, but what she lost on the roundabout she made up on the swings. Her besetting sin was jealousy, combined with the selfishness and duplicity of a Borgia. Because she was less unusual than either Gulla Slogum or Jenny Hager, she is probably more indicative of the modern novelist's compulsion to distrust appearances.

That writers are more and more skeptical of woman's goodly outside is all too evident from the number of books which strip the skin-deep beauty from their heroines to reveal the ugliness within. Henry Bellamann, in a somewhat lurid novel, revealed the cold ambition of Victoria Grandolet, who stole her best friend's lover and soured his life in order to win social security. Augusta Fritzhoff, of *No Mortal Fire*, determined that her family should, even in America, retain the standards of the German aristocrat and was willing to kill to get her way. Janie, of Taylor Caldwell's *The Wide House*, beat her son Angus, lived in sin with Stuart Coleman, and remained generally unpleasant and egoistic until the end. Christine Noble Go-

van had Isabel visit *Jennifer's House* and make herself its mistress. Mrs. de Rendon, of Anne Parrish's *Poor Child*, was beautiful and callous. Mrs. Jardine, of Rosamond Lehmann's *The Ballad and the Source*, was a more complex personality. We meet her first as a pleasant, slightly tedious old lady, and gradually we learn how she has ruined life after life by her blindness to everything but her own impulses. James Hilton's new best-seller, *So Well Remembered*, gives another version of the 1945 *femme fatale*. Olivia is described as "forever half-child, half-woman." She had led a lonely life as a child, centering all her affection upon her father; she grew up hating the town which had sent this father to prison. Olivia married a goodhearted man, brought his life crashing about his ears by eloping with somebody else, cherished this second husband into neglect of his duty, and did her best to smother her son with love.

These "monsters" are noteworthy for two reasons: they show that novelists are more and more concerned with women as erring human beings, and they demonstrate once more that sins against conventional codes are held to be less important than sins against people. Sexual immorality, to these authors, is not so culpable as a sort of sexual cannibalism. Adultery is seldom condemned *per se* but only as it works injury to another. Completely loyal love is a warm and positive thing, not the absence of wrongdoing.

The most popular novel since *Gone with the Wind* is Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*; over two million copies were sold in less than two years. Francie Nolan, therefore, should give a fairly accurate picture of today's fiction heroine. Francie grew up in Brooklyn in the midst of poverty, ignorance, sex-

ual recklessness, religious fervor. She was about as far from being a sheltered child as one can imagine. Yet Francie became a sensitive young woman with a great tolerance for the weakness of others and an almost puritanical determination to be true to her own ideals of intellectual honesty and service to her fellows. She was strong through knowledge, not ignorance.

Pretty much the same thing can be said of three other girls who grow to womanhood in recent novels: Sonia Marburg, of Jean Stafford's *The Boston Adventure*; Katherine Forrester, of Madeleine L'Engle's *The Small Rain*; and Sandra Echols, of Evelyn West's *Animal Fair*. These three and Francie Nolan are the contemporary young woman's idea of the contemporary girl. It seems reasonable to assume that they show a general attitude toward the heroine of today's fiction, the "typical" girl. She is neither a saint nor a monster. It is quite evident that, in spite of a fundamental wholesomeness, she has little patience with the moral codes of the past. She is doing her own thinking, and if it leads to trouble she has the courage to pay the piper.

The women of today's stories have, to a large extent, broken away from the past. They have developed a strong consciousness of their part in the world. In some women this independence of mind may mean the sexual lawlessness of the sophisticate; in others it may mean a

crusading rage against religious or race prejudice. They have left the parlor and the kitchen for the outside world. They play active roles in business and politics. They meet men, in love or conflict, as equals—no quarter asked or given. They have become less "feminine." But, because they are individuals instead of types, they have become bafflingly complex.

It is obvious that the skeptic could prove and disprove almost any theory about the heroine of modern fiction by selecting his books appropriately. She follows no pattern. She ranges from the simple strength of Viney Post, in Herbert Best's *Young 'Un*, to the cheerful wackiness of Margery Sharp's *Cluny Brown*; from the self-indulgent weakness of Sinclair Lewis' Jinny Marshland, in *Cass Timberlane*, to the strong-minded independence of Jessie Benton Fremont, the *Immortal Wife*; from the mysticism of Franz Werfel's Bernadette to the cute bossiness of Adeline Whiteoaks in *The Building of Jalna*. There are heroines of today's fiction who live only for love, others who live only for society, or power, or money, or their children. There are dozens upon dozens of them who do not live at all in any real sense.

The heroine of today's fiction, in short, has all the infinite variety and ever new fascination of today's woman, but don't let her individual idiosyncrasies blind you to the fact that, like today's woman, she is bold and strong and iconoclastic.

Melting-Pot Literature¹

CARL WITTKÉ²

TO THE end of the first World War, the central theme of American history was the impact of successive immigrant tides upon a New World environment and the interaction of racial and national characteristics with the forces of geography. America "changed the bone in the cheeks of many races," as millions from across the Atlantic passed through our unguarded gates seeking opportunities which Europe had failed to provide.

The United States was born of the satisfying experiences of our forefathers who came from many lands and dedicated this nation to the principle that men of diverse racial and national origins and creeds can build a society based on liberty, equality, opportunity, and tolerance for individual differences.

Shortly after the first World War, the doors of the United States were closed to unrestricted immigration. They will hardly be reopened. Yet as late as 1900 fully half the school children in the thirty leading cities of the United States had foreign-born fathers; and, if we count our foreign-born citizens today, include the first-generation descendants of immigrants, and add the aliens legally here, nearly one-third of the population still is of foreign origin.³

¹ A Phi Beta Kappa address at Oberlin.

² Professor of history and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Oberlin College. Author, *inter alia*, of *German-Americans and the World War* (1931); *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (1939); *Against the Current: The Life of Karl Heinsen* (1945).

³ On immigrant contributions to America see Carl Wittké, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (New York, 1939).

Ever since the days of Frederick Jackson Turner, historians have stressed the significance of the frontier in American history, but they have elaborated his thesis largely in terms of politics and economics. The hundreds of immigrant communities in the United States, which provided the human connecting-link between the cultural heritage of the Old World and the emerging pattern of the New, received relatively little attention.⁴

History deals with the movement of ideas and institutions, as well as of men; and, in the transit of civilization across the Atlantic, a lot of culture was transported in immigrant chests.

Works of art are historical documents, for they reflect the time, place, and kind of society which produce them, and the work of the creative artist is in large measure determined by the social milieu and the history of which he is a part. But creative artists also help to determine history. Thus literature is both a creative social force and an instrument of cultural analysis, a fine art and "an instrument of social influence." As such, it has specific significance for historians, who find in the literary documents of any period many of the unifying concepts with which they have to deal.

The fusion of diverse ethnic groups into a common culture and a common nationality is one of the fascinating processes of American history, but it has only rarely been the concern of literature or the theme of American historians.

⁴ Marcus L. Hansen, "The Problem of the Third Generation," *Augustana Historical Society Publications* (1938).

To the middle of the last century the cultural pattern of the United States was essentially British, and our literature was almost entirely in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Since then, western, eastern, and southern Europe have imported their cultural heritage to America. Hilary St. George Saunders, an Englishman who published his reflections on the United States last year in a book entitled *Pioneers! O Pioneers!*⁵ frankly recognized the cultural complexity of present-day America when he wrote: "Americans are a foreign people. Less than fifty per cent of them, I believe, have any English blood in them at all. . . . The fact that they speak our language, or, more exactly, a forceful adaptation of it, full of fire and color, does not mean that they use it to express our view of life." Nevertheless, it is impossible to find a single literary masterpiece which interprets the American enterprise through the eyes of a Jew, an Irishman, a German, or a Slav.⁶

Since 1900, Americans of non-English stock have become somewhat more articulate in the field of literature. Theodore Dreiser and Fannie Hurst, Carl Sandburg, James T. Farrell, John Dos Passos, and William Saroyan have had an occasional interest in immigrant types but usually only in order to picture them in the process of adjustment to what they call "the promise of American life."

The late Professor Hansen, himself the son of an immigrant Norwegian pastor, and an able historian, suggested that a special obligation rests upon the third generation to exploit the immigrant theme in American history, for they alone can recapture the atmosphere of the immigrant communities from which they

stem, use the sources which lie buried in an immigrant tongue, and grasp the mentality of people who had to straddle two cultures in adjusting to American conditions. The late Vernon L. Parrington was interested in the same theme from the point of view of a professor of literature. "To gather up," he wrote, "and preserve in letters these diverse folk strains before they are submerged and lost in the common American *mores*, would seem to be a business that our fiction might undertake with profit."⁷

Immigration really was a desperate adventure. It was a most important moment in the lifetime of any man when he said farewell to his native land forever and watched its coast line sink beneath the horizon. The problems of cultural minorities; the conflict in the soul of the immigrant who must reject the Old World in order to be accepted in the New; the inferiority complexes resulting from artificially enforced Americanization; the anxiety and aspiration, unhappiness, and sheer confusion that mark the conflicts of the second generation with their immigrant parents—these are themes that, in spite of their great meaning for America, have received relatively little attention in American fiction.

The Pennsylvania Germans, or "Pennsylvania Dutch," as they are popularly known, trace their ancestors back to Colonial days. Their language is the oldest immigrant language still in daily use in the United States. Though the Pennsylvania Dutch are of pure Colonial, American stock and broke every bond with the land of their origin many generations ago, they continue to speak two languages, and, of late, their descendants have become sufficiently proud of their

⁵ Macmillan Co., 1944.

⁶ See Howard Mumford Jones, *Ideas in America* (Cambridge, 1944), and *Foreign Influences in American Life*, ed. David F. Bowers (Princeton, 1944).

⁷ *The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America, 1860-1920* (New York, 1930), p. 395.

heritage to produce a veritable renaissance in Pennsylvania Dutch literature.

In recent years several writers of fiction have looked upon the Pennsylvania Dutch from the outside and found them quaint enough to write about. The first to make a literary career of their peculiarities was Helen Riemensnyder Martin. Her *Tillie, a Mennonite Maid* appeared in 1904 and proved so successful that the author turned out one novel after another thereafter, according to the same unfailing formula and with the same standard setting. The Pennsylvania Dutch have resented her practice of representing the exceptional as the customary, but such protests did not diminish the author's royalties. Four of her tales were turned into pictures by Hollywood, and one made Broadway, when Minnie Maddern Fiske starred in *Erstwhile Susan*.

Elsie Singmaster's tales have been less offensive to the Pennsylvania Dutch, among whom she has lived for years. By 1940 she had produced about two hundred and fifty stories. *Katy Gaumer*, her first novel, appeared in 1915. Her *Ellen Levis*, a tale that used the old Ephrata Cloister in Pennsylvania for a setting, was published in 1921. Katherine Riegel Loose, writing under the pen name of George Schock, published many short stories, and two full-length novels, about the Pennsylvania Dutch country.⁸ Joseph Hergesheimer's *The Foolscap Rose* (1934) has a Pennsylvania Dutch motif, and Mildred Jordan's *One Red Rose Forever*, which exploits the life and loves of the eccentric Baron Stiegel, almost became a best-seller. Joseph Yoder, himself an Amishman, in his *Rosanna of the Amish* (1940), tells the story of an Irish girl who was adopted by an Amish woman and

gradually became integrated into the Amish community; and, in 1941, *Papa Is All*, a play of no great distinction, dealing with a Mennonite family of Lancaster County, was produced with great success by the New York Theatre Guild.

Greed for material possessions, a tendency toward the vulgar, and a degrading superstition manifested in such folk practices as powwowing and hexing are characteristics of some Pennsylvania Dutch communities to this day and lend themselves to literary exploitation by writers whose royalties are derived from describing the quaint and the queer in "local color" fiction.⁹

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, immigrants by the tens of thousands moved westward into the virgin prairies of Middle America. Swedish, Norwegian, German, and, to a lesser degree, Polish, Czech, Danish, and Irish farmers helped win the Mississippi Valley for agriculture.

The literary output of the first phase of this immigrant-farmer frontier was meager indeed, for pioneering left little time for writing, and those who had talent for belles-lettres had to earn a living at something more practical and remunerative. Yet here were historical and literary materials for the most gifted novelist. Men and women struggled with the hard prairie soil, and against the blind forces of Nature, during the decades that marked the steady, silent march of peoples toward the Pacific. Here is history with a gripping, human, emotional appeal, for the advance of the American frontier must be measured in terms of human happiness and suffering, endurance, optimism, and despair, unexpected success and tragic defeat. Some of the finer, human values were wasted

⁸ *Hearts Contending* (1910) and *The House of York* (1923).

⁹ See Earl F. Robacker, *Pennsylvania German Literature* (Philadelphia, 1943), pp. 107-13, 121-43.

or destroyed as men and women struggled with primitive forces more powerful than their own. This westward march is a somber tale of "peasant heroines, with their strong natures hidden under queer speech and garb, set in a waste of wild red grass, bitter winters, burning summers, virgin soil and great loneliness." It is also "the great American romance that gives life and drama to our history."¹⁰

For decades the literary output of Swedish-American authors may better be described as Swedish literature in America rather than Swedish-American literature, for the great majority of them were born in the Old World. The literature of Swedish-America was marked by a deep nostalgia for the old home in Sweden, and, the longer a writer remained away from the fatherland, the more idealistically beautiful his descriptions of it were likely to be. Gradually, the American theme received greater attention. Journalists like Johan Alfred Enander published short stories about the land of their adoption in *Hemlandet*, one of the most important Swedish immigrant papers in America; and Anders Schön wrote about Swedish-American settlements in *Prärieblommen*, a literary annual which he edited. Yet as late as 1917, Edward Schuck, who had come to the United States in 1889, published a novel of pioneer days in Swedish, and Oscar Leonard Strömberg, who wrote many novels about his fellow-countrymen in Nebraska, where he had settled in 1895, did not produce a single work in English. The universal theme of these writers was the assimilation of the immigrant. Though mediocre literary products, their books are valuable source material for the historian and the sociologist who can read them.

Many second-generation Swedish-

¹⁰ Parrington, *op. cit.*, pp. 383, 387.

Americans wrote in English, and a few achieved literary reputations; but, strangely enough, they seldom wrote about the immigrant theme. Carl Sandburg, for example, whose father was a poor Swedish immigrant who came to Illinois to build railroads in the 1870's, and changed his name from Johnson to Sandburg because Swedish Johnsons were too plentiful, has written much about "The People, Yes," but practically nothing about the Swedish stock to which he belongs. It is the third generation, no longer embarrassed by the peculiarities of their forebears, and genuinely proud of their achievements, who exploit a theme which their fathers generally ignored.

Latchstring Out, published last year by Skulda V. Banér, is an example of what one can expect in increasing volume in the next few decades. It is not great literature but a charming tale about Swedes who lived in a mining town in Upper Michigan at the turn of the century, and it is full of good-natured nostalgia for old Swedish customs and traditions imported by the early immigrants. Not the least important feature of the book are the colored illustrations by David Hendrickson.¹¹ Elmer T. Peterson's *Trumpets West*, a pioneer novel of Iowa and Kansas, and Stuart David Engstrand's *They Sought for Paradise*, a Harper's book concerned with the Swedish religious communists of Bishop Hill, Illinois, are additional examples of a new Swedish note in American fiction.¹²

¹¹ For Swedish-American literature see *Swedes in America, 1836-1938*, ed. Adolph B. Benson and Naboth Hedin (New Haven, 1938), pp. 191-93, 205, 209-18.

¹² See also Holger Lundbergh, "The Swedish Story in Children's Books," *American Swedish Monthly* (New York), December, 1944, p. 23, and the same author's "New Swedish Note in American Fiction," *ibid.*, November, 1944, pp. 12-13, 24-25.

It was not until nearly fifty years after Norwegians had settled in fairly large numbers in the United States that they began to try their wings in the field of fiction. The first Norwegian to use English successfully as a literary language, and to find a place in American literature, was Hjalmer Hjorth Boyesen, who came West in 1869 and settled temporarily at Urbana, Ohio, then a center of Swedenborgian influence and the seat of a university maintained by the Swedenborgian church. Boyesen belonged to the intelligentsia and became a professor at Cornell and Columbia. His first novel, *Gunnar*, written after one year's residence in the United States, was an idyl of Norway, written "to express . . . homesickness and longing for my beautiful native land." Through the influence of William Dean Howells, it was published serially in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1873 and later in book form. By 1895 it was in its eighth edition. In 1876 Scribner's issued Boyesen's *Falconberg*, an immigrant tale of Pine Ridge, Wisconsin, in which the author denounced the folly of resisting Americanization and urged his countrymen to merge with the "new and great civilization" of the American West. Thereafter, Boyesen abandoned the immigrant motif to write *Mammon of Unrighteousness* (1891) and other books which were forerunners of the modern sociological novel.

Norwegian-American fiction really began with Tellef Grundysen, a drug clerk of Decorah, Iowa, and a farmer in Minnesota. In 1877 he wrote *Fra begge sider af havet* ("From Both Sides of the Sea"). It was a novel dealing with Norwegian-American settlement by one who had experienced much of what he described—a simple, crude chronicle of a Norwegian family in Norway and in Minnesota. Though its author was not a successful

literary craftsman, his book went into many editions, for it was a commonplace but realistic family saga of ordinary people who had come from a cotter's home in Norway to pioneer in Minnesota and whose son became a medical student at the University of Wisconsin.¹³

After the Civil War, over a hundred Norwegian-American novels were published. Very few were translated into English. They constitute historical fiction of little literary importance but of substantial value to the historian of immigration. As typical examples, one may mention O. A. Buslett's *The Way to the Golden Gate* and H. A. Foss's *Valborg*, the first a significant attempt to understand the psychology of the immigrant, the second a description of the trek of the pioneers from Wisconsin to the Red River Valley.

In the present century the standard of literary excellence in Norwegian-American literature improved remarkably, though some of the best writing was still done in Norwegian. Simon Johnson's three novels, *In a New Kingdom*, *The Braastad Bankruptcy*, and *The Home of Freedom*, appeared between 1914 and 1925. They were written in Norwegian and portray pioneer life in the Dakotas. Johannes B. Wist's *Nykommenbilleder* ("Immigrant Scenes") (1920), *Hjemmet Paa Praerien* ("The Home on the Prairie") (1921), and *Jonasville* (1922) constitute another trilogy of Norwegian immigrant novels which deal primarily with the difficult period of transition from one culture to another. During the last twenty-five years a substantial number of novels and short stories in immigrant fiction have been published in both

¹³ See Laurence M. Larson, *The Changing West* (Northfield, 1937), chapters on "Tellef Grundysen and the Beginnings of Norwegian-American Fiction" (pp. 49-66) and "Hjalmer Hjorth Boyesen" (pp. 83-115).

Norwegian and English. They constitute a veritable source collection for a regional history of the Northwest. Many deal with the conflicts and antagonisms between the first and the second generations; some of the best, like Waldemar Ager's *Paa Veien til Smeltapotten* ("On the Way to the Melting Pot"), though originally written in Norwegian, have been translated into English.¹⁴

Thus a rather long tradition in Norwegian-American pioneer literature reaches a distinguished climax in the well-known trilogy of Ole Edvart Rølvaag—*Giants in the Earth*, *Peder Victorious*, and *Their Father's God*. A professor at St. Olaf College, Rølvaag had published three novels in Norwegian before he began on the volumes which made him a figure of national importance. Rølvaag's characters were drawn from his own experiences as an immigrant in the Northwest. He understood the psychological struggle of the newcomer, who could not give up the old, nor quite master or accept the new. He knew that one could be ostracized by one's own people for accepting too readily the pattern of the adopted country and had experienced the sheer physical perils of pioneering.

When *Giants in the Earth* appeared in 1927, the *Nation* described it as "the fullest, finest and most powerful novel that has been written about pioneer life in America." It is significant because of its realistic descriptions of a pioneer country and even more so because of its grasp of the psychological experiences of the immigrant in a new land. Per Hansa, the hero, symbolized the power of man over the elements—the primitive, con-

quering strength of the Norwegian settler who could wrest a farm from the unbroken prairie but who, in the end, succumbed to the blind forces of Nature against which he struggled in vain. His wife, Beret, represented the primitive ineradicable fears of the pioneer woman. Though she lived in a Dakota sod hut, her soul remained in the homeland, and eventually she was overwhelmed by the ominous silences of the prairie and sank from loneliness into insanity.

In *Peder Victorious* (1929) Rølvaag's leading character was the sturdy offspring of immigrant parents, in whom centered all the conflicts of the second generation. He was at once the master of two languages, the blender of two cultures, and the tragic victim of the inevitable chasm that divides the immigrant from his American-born children. Peder slowly drifted away from his mother and the traditions of his people, and he was constantly at war within himself, torn by a desire to conform and a desire to revolt. Eventually, the spiritual, folk bond, which united him with his people, was broken, and in *Their Father's God*, the last of the trilogy, there emerges a new type of American, an American-born Norwegian Lutheran, married to the daughter of his Irish Catholic neighbor. Rølvaag won distinction in the field of American fiction, but he also is the greatest historian of the Norwegian-American tradition.¹⁵

Willa Cather perhaps is the best example of native American writers who made

¹⁴ See, on this subject, Theodore C. Blegen, *Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition* (Northfield, 1940), esp. chap. xviii, "Frontiers of Culture"; and Aagot D. Hoidahl, "Norwegian-American Fiction, 1880-1928," *Norwegian-American Studies and Records* (Northfield), V (1930), 61-83.

¹⁵ See also Kenneth Bjørk: "The Unknown Rølvaag: Secretary of the Norwegian-American Historical Association," *Norwegian-American Studies and Records*, XI 114-49; Nora O. Solum, "The Sources of the Rølvaag Biography," *Norwegian-American Studies and Records*, XI, 150-59; and Percy H. Boynton, *The Rediscovery of the Frontier* (Chicago, 1931), chap. iv, "The Immigrant Pioneer in Fiction," and his *America in Contemporary Fiction* (Chicago, 1940).

immigrant types the leading characters of their novels. Her parents had taken her to Nebraska when she was but eight years old. Here she was reared amid the frontier conditions of the 1880's and 1890's. She watched a half-million people come into Nebraska in one decade—Yankees, Germans, Poles, Bohemians, and Scandinavians—she listened to sermons in Norwegian, French, and Danish; and she visited county seats where the foreign-born element was so numerous that little English was spoken.

Willa Cather's *O Pioneers!*, *The Song of the Lark*, and *My Ántonia* dealt with newly transplanted Europeans, the only neighbors she knew in her early days. She described their struggles to succeed and the gradual intermixture of many immigrant strains. Most of her women characters were immigrants, set against a background of prairie, condemned to the arduous labors of the pioneer, but full of hope for the future. Under the impact of the forces of Americanization, some of her characters became vulgarized into a conventional mold; others struggled on with a tenacious desire to win the good earth and material success. Miss Cather soon turned to other themes, but her *Ántonia*, in the words of Percy Boynton, remains "the apotheosis of the pioneer woman."

Strangely enough, the large German and Irish immigration to America has had comparatively little influence upon American fiction. Herbert Krause's *Wind without Rain* is a novel of German immigrants in the agricultural West, and Vincent Sheean's *Bird of the Wilderness* is a rather feeble attempt to make the spiritual crisis of the German-Americans during the first World War the basis for a novel. Though the book was published only four years ago, its essential themes

and its setting were the subject of the first long story Sheean ever wrote.

The Irish immigration left its indelible mark upon the American vaudeville stage, and, for a time, Irish immigrant plays were as popular as minstrel shows. But Irish-American fiction is of rather recent origin. Doran Hurley and Joseph Dineen have done significant writing in this field, and the novels of James T. Farrell are outstanding. His seventeen short stories about Irish adolescents in Chicago were published under the title, *Can All This Grandeur Perish*; but Farrell is best known for his trilogy, *Studs Lonigan*, which began to appear in 1935. These volumes are a large-scale sociological and historical study of second- and third-generation urban Irish. They are not pleasant reading. They represent modern "naturalism" at its most depressing best. *Studs Lonigan* was a product of Chicago's South Side and the Fifty-eighth Street gang, the offspring of an Irish house-painter and contractor and a devoted and bigoted mother who wanted her son to become a priest. The tale is a pathetic account of primitive Irishmen, whose powerful hands and strong backs could build canals and railroads and skyscrapers but for whom the problems of urban, industrial society proved too complicated to solve. In *A World I Never Made*, which Farrell published in 1936, he described an Irish working-class family enmeshed in a brutal struggle for existence in present-day America, yet his characters, almost without exception, have one consuming ambition—"to make my kids something better."¹⁶

The experiences and trials of second- and third-generation immigrant stock

¹⁶ On Farrell, see Oscar Cargill, *Intellectual America: Ideas on the March* (New York, 1941), pp. 159-71.

lend themselves especially well to treatment in short-story form. Such short stories appeared by the scores in a variety of periodicals, from the *Pictorial Review* and *Esquire* to the *American Mercury* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. Leonard Q. Ross's accounts of Hyman Kaplan's amusing struggles with the English language ran first in the *New Yorker*. Kathryn Forbes's Norwegian-American vignettes, published in book form as *Mamma's Bank Account*, in 1943, and the basis for the Broadway hit, *I Remember Mamma*, appeared first in the *Reader's Digest*. Pietro di Donato's *Christ in Concrete*, a pathetic, realistic tale of Italians, grew out of a short story first published in *Esquire*.

The newer immigrant is gradually finding his place in American fiction. Robert M. Coates's *The Fury* deals with old and new Americans on Coney Island. The number of novels depicting the life of the Jewish element in America is steadily increasing. Anzia Yezierska's *Children of Loneliness* and *Hungry Hearts* are moving tales of "children of loneliness, wandering between worlds that are too old and too new to live in." Myra Kelly's *Little Citizens*, humorous and penetrating tales of Jewish children on New York's East Side, was one of the first literary recognitions of this important immigrant group in America. Abraham Cahan's *Rise of David Levinsky* is well known. Myron Brinig, son of a Jewish shopkeeper, born in Minneapolis and reared in Montana, wrote many tales of pioneer days, and one of them, *Singermann*, is the story of a Jewish immigrant who became a merchant in the West. Michael Gold, though better known as a writer for the *New York Call*, the *Masses*, and the *Liberator*, and as co-founder of the *New Masses* in 1933, wrote one novel which portrays the life

of the Jews in the New York ghetto. His parents came from Rumania, and his father was a peddler and suspender-maker on New York's East Side. Daniel Fuchs's *Summer in Williamsburg* is also concerned with the Jewish group, and Meyer Levin's *The Old Bunch* describes Jewish boys and girls who escape from their sweatshop environment in Chicago, into careers in politics, the professions, racketeering, or "just plain inertia."¹⁷ Plays like *Abie's Irish Rose* and the *Potash and Perlmutter* series were a great commercial success not only in the United States but, unfortunately, in the Old World as well.

Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906), perhaps his most significant book in a long line of crusading novels, described the life of a South European immigrant couple amid the filth, suffering, and poverty of the Chicago stockyards district. Edward J. Nichols' *Hunky Johnny* is the nostalgic story of first- and second-generation Slovaks of the Chicago industrial suburbs during the prohibition and depression years of the early 1930's. Phil Stong, the novelist, in his recent *The Iron Mountain* (New York, 1942) describes life in the colorful co-operative boarding-houses of the Finns.¹⁸ Nelson Algren, born of Swedish stock in Chicago, wrote a novel about the Poles of the West Side, which Harper's published under the title, *Never Come Morning*. John Roderigo Dos Passos, grandson of a Portuguese immigrant and educated at Harvard, grew up "with the sense of difference which even the sensitive grandsons of immigrants can feel in

¹⁷ Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *America in Midpassage* (New York, 1931) pp. 699-703.

¹⁸ See John Ilmari Kolehmainen, "The Finnish Pioneers in Minnesota," *Minnesota History*, December, 1944, p. 325.

America"¹⁹ and, somehow, still writes his realistic strictures of contemporary capitalism as though he were an outsider looking at *Manhattan Transfer* and the U.S.A.

A list of authors of a new body of recent Italian-American novels would include, besides Pietro di Donato, the names of Jo Pagano and Louis Forgione. Guido d'Agostino wrote many short stories, and his first novel, *Olives on the Apple Tree*, was published in 1940. Much of John Fante's earlier work is autobiographical. His father came from Italy, and his novels are descriptions of second-generation Italians of the working class to which his people belonged.

A final word about immigrant biographies. They are appearing in increasing numbers and are in themselves proof of the immigrant's progress in America. Many are highly fictionalized autobiography, and some are written with an eye to sales. They invariably reveal a certain buoyant optimism, for they are the success stories of men and women whose dreams came true. They are in sharp contrast with the cynical note of disillusionment that sounds through so much of modern American fiction.

Jacob A. Riis's *The Making of an American* (1901) and Mary Antin's *The Promised Land* (1912) appeared before the first World War. *The Americanization of Edward Bok*, published in 1920, is the story of a lad who came from Holland with nothing but bare hands and expansive dreams and rose to riches and influence in the land of his choice. Louis Adamic, a South Slav, in his *My America* looks upon the United States as a never ending process toward perfection. George and Helen Waite Papashvily's

¹⁹ Alfred Kazin, *On Native Grounds* (New York, 1942), p. 345.

Anything Can Happen (1944) is a lively, imaginative story of the Americanization of a Georgian who came to Ellis Island on a Greek ship some twenty years ago. Michael Pupin's *From Immigrant to Inventor* (1923) is the story of a Serbian boy who landed in America with five cents in his pocket, who had sold most of his clothes, including a black-and-red embroidered yellow sheepskin coat, to pay his passage money, and who would have been excluded as an illiterate under the present immigration laws. He became one of the greatest scientists and inventors of our time.²⁰

The reader of these pages can easily discover many serious omissions. It is impossible to treat adequately the field of American immigrant literature within the limits of this brief essay, and new volumes continue to appear. Perhaps enough has been said to establish the main thesis of this paper, namely, that the blending of many cultures with an American way of life is a theme for both the historian and the novelist. It concerns not only politics, economics, and intercourse between nations but all the complex forces of social history and subtle problems of social psychology. Fortunately, the many fibers from which the fabric of America is being woven are still sufficiently intact to enable both the historian and the writer of fiction to discover the color and quality of the many strands which constitute the national pattern. Here is a field of study on the vague border line of history and literature, upon which the techniques of both may be profitably combined.

²⁰ See also Ralph P. Boas and Katherine Burton, *Social Backgrounds of American Literature* (Boston, 1939), and the facetious article by George Panetta, "Strictly Personal—I Had a Baby Instead," *Saturday Review of Literature*, XXVIII, No. 7, 15-16.

Cooper and the European Puzzle

RUSSELL KIRK¹

I

IN THESE days of confident talk of an American reconstruction of Europe upon democratic principles, in these days of fall-of-France and it-can-happen-here novels by the score, it is more than a little interesting to look at, and even to read, certain stories of European life and politics written by a sturdy American democrat of the 1830's—James Fenimore Cooper.

Cooper's comments upon his America frequently have been discussed and were so thoroughly summarized by him in *The American Democrat* as to make other examination of them almost unnecessary; that little book on the American scene should be more generally read. Yet despite the persistency with which the squire of Cooperstown insisted upon making his points of view understood—an insistence both ill-timed and irritating, on occasion—his stand almost always has been met with hostility from his critics or else has been misunderstood. A surprising example of misinterpretation of Cooper's ideas is to be found in R. E. Spiller's *Fenimore Cooper*. Professor Spiller knows his Cooper well enough, but in this book he appears to know his social and historical criticism hardly at all and to be even less familiar with Cooper's age. It is necessary only to note that Spiller repeatedly refers to Aaron Burr as a Federalist, as the colleague of Jay, and as the Federalist opponent of Jefferson

for the presidency!² Not merely does he display an ignorance of the period, but sometimes he utterly misunderstands Cooper's opinions, as when he declares that "consolidation was Cooper's fundamental political conviction, and it proved to be not a fallacy."³ This astounding conclusion seems to be based upon a letter to Cooper from Henry Cruger, a Charlestonian, during the nullification days, in which the Carolinian reproached Cooper for his centralistic leanings. But to be accused of such tendencies by a Nullifier hardly meant that one was an advocate of consolidation; on such a premise, a state-rights man like John Randolph might be called a centralizer. It hardly is possible that Spiller could have read, at the time he wrote in this vein, the chapter "On the Republic of the United States," in *The American Democrat*—that section in which Cooper refutes so cogently the nationalistic theory of the formation of the Union advanced by Marshall and Webster.⁴ That Cooper's political thought is treated in this unsatisfactory fashion is reason for a re-examination of his principles.

It is worth while to examine an aspect of Cooper's social philosophy sometimes neglected—the political thought contained in those works of his of which the scene is laid in Europe. These stories usually are listed as three: *The Bravo*, *The Heidenmauer*, and *The Headsman*.

² Robert E. Spiller, *Fenimore Cooper: Critic of His Times* (1931), pp. 18, 23, and 25.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁴ *The American Democrat*, pp. 17-27.

¹ United States Army.

There are, however, other novels of his which deal in part with European institutions—*Precautién*, *Mercedes of Castile*, *The Two Admirals*, and *The Wing-and-Wing*. The American's account of his travels in France, Switzerland, Italy, and England are useful, too, in the consideration of this subject.

Cooper said of *The Bravo* that it was his most American book, "but thousands in this country who clamor about such things do not know American principles when they meet them, unless it may happen to be in a Fourth of July oration."⁵ There is much to be said for Cooper's contention that American realities can best be discerned in the European perspective. Henry James was to hold the same opinion.

II

Cooper had been residing for years in Europe when, in November, 1831, *The Bravo* was published. The first political novel from his pen called forth the praise of those who already sided with him in his views, as the artist Greenough, in Paris, wrote, "Cooper's new book, 'The Bravo,' is taking wonderfully here. If you could transfuse a little of that man's love of country and national pride into the leading members of our high society, I think it would leaven them all."⁶ What was it in this romance of old Venice—a story inoffensive indeed, in comparison with some crude pamphleteering that passes for fiction today—that aroused controversy in the prints and on the streets of two continents in that age? A part of the general interest arose from the fact that the political moral of the tale was not so pointed but

that more than one faction could claim it for their own—or could maintain, at least, that its strictures did not apply to their party. As Addison's *Cato* was applauded by Whigs and by Tories, so did portions of *The Bravo* sometimes offend and sometimes please both liberals and conservatives in Europe and America. Cooper's precise purpose in writing his European novels still is in doubt, it seems. Lounsbury holds that he intended to instruct Europeans in the advantages of American democracy;⁷ Boynton maintains that he was attacking European political systems "for the edification of American democracy";⁸ and Spiller contends that he was defending American ideals before a hostile world.⁹ Although in some measure all these intentions were Cooper's, a most important aspect of his thought has been forgotten by each of his biographers: that Cooper was holding up the failings of European systems as a warning to America that her free institutions, too, could perish—as he had elsewhere expressed his fear for real liberty in America.

The Bravo, with its close-knit plot, its sustained action, its credible characters, and the tragic consistency of its conclusion, surely is the best of the European novels; yet Lounsbury, referring to this romance, writes:

The first of the three is generally spoken of as the best, especially by those who have read none of them at all. Little difference will be found, however, as a matter of fact, between "The Bravo" and "The Headsman" as regards literary merit. "The Heidenmauer" is, however, distinctly inferior, and is in truth one of the most tedious novels that Cooper ever wrote. All were, however, animated by the same spirit. They all assailed oligarchical, and lauded democratic institutions. They were full of denunciations of the accommodating stupidity of the

⁵ Quoted in H. W. Boynton, *James Fenimore Cooper* (1931), p. 226.

⁶ T. R. Lounsbury, *James Fenimore Cooper* (1893), pp. 109-10.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 230.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 217.

patricians who were never able to see anything beneficial to the interests of the state in what was injurious to the interests of their own order. . . .¹⁰

Lounsbury's attitude toward Cooper's works is revealed by the phrase "one of the most tedious novels." His summary of the thesis of the European stories, while true in the sense that Cooper was the champion of republican institutions, is inadequate; for Cooper went deeper than a mere demagogic contrast of patrician and plebian. He found causes in institutions and traditions or in the absence of these influences. Nor is it true, as Spiller hints, that Cooper was an enthusiast for "progress." Spiller would have us believe that Cooper "chose for his topic the decline of the old order before the growing liberalism of the new. His Venice is a city in the decay of waning powers; his monastery of the Palatinate has already felt the power of the Lutheran movement; in *The Headsman*, the corruptions of the old social order are resolved in the purifying atmosphere of the Bernese Alps."¹¹

How Mr. Spiller arrives at these conclusions is hard to understand. The tone of *The Bravo* is one of unrelieved gloom; the city-state of Venice is indeed declining and without hope of regeneration; the "growing liberalism" is apparent only in *The Heidenmauer* and, even there, is hardly presented with enthusiasm.

The Bravo is an account of the nominal republic of Venice, early in the seventeenth century, a decaying state under the heel of aristocracy, that government Cooper so roundly condemned in *The American Democrat*. The secret government—government by lion's mouth—provides Cooper's plot. Liberty is en-

gulfed in private cupidity, in class selfishness, in the mechanism of the state, and in general fear. The forms of freedom are preserved; the exercise of freedom is lost. Jacopo, the bravo, is compelled to serve as *agent provocateur* and scapegoat for the Council. He struggles in his toils but is bound to the state through fear for his imprisoned father. Although he succeeds in rescuing two lovers from the grasp of the Council, he is given at last as a sacrifice to popular fury; and, despite the endeavors of the Doge himself, the necessities of the state bring him to the block, and, as the novel ends, his severed head rolls on the ground.

Had Cooper considered Venice a true republic, this plot would have been a stern criticism of American institutions; but Venice was not America, although America could lose her liberties in similar fashion. As Cooper states in his Preface:

It is to be regretted the world does not discriminate more justly in its use of political terms. Governments are usually called either monarchies or republics. The former class embraces equally those institutions in which the sovereign is worshipped as a god, and those in which he performs the humble office of a manikin. In the latter we find aristocracies and democracies blended in the same generic appellation. The consequences of a generalization so wide is an utter confusion on the subject of the polity of states. . . .

A history of the progress of political liberty, written purely in the interests of humanity, is still a desideratum in literature. In nations which have made a false commencement, it would be found that the citizen, or rather the subject, has extorted immunity after immunity, as his growing intelligence and importance have both instructed and required him to defend those particular rights which were necessary to his well-being. A certain accumulation of these immunities constitutes, with a solitary and partial exception in Switzerland, the essence of European liberty, even at this hour. It is scarcely necessary to tell the reader that this freedom,

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 109.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 217.

be it more or less, depends on a principle entirely different from our own. Here the immunities do not proceed from, but they are granted to, the government, being, in other words, concessions of natural rights made by the people to the state for the benefits of social protection. So long as this vital difference exists between ourselves and other nations, it will be vain to think of finding analogies in their institutions. It is true that, in an age like this, public opinion is itself a charter, and that the most despotic government which exists within the pale of Christendom, must, in some degree, respect its influence. The mildest and justest governments in Europe are, at this moment, theoretically despotisms. . . . Admitting every benefit which possibly can flow from a just administration, with wise and humane princes, a government which is not properly based on the people possesses an unavoidable and oppressive evil of the first magnitude, in the necessity of supporting itself by physical force and onerous impositions, against the natural action of the majority.

Were we to characterize a republic, we should say it was a state in which power, both theoretically and practically, is derived from the nation, with a constant responsibility that is neither to be evaded or denied. That such a system is better on a large than on a small scale, though contrary to brilliant theories which have been written to uphold different institutions, must be evident on the smallest reflection, since the danger of all popular governments is from popular mistakes; and a people of diversified interests and extended territorial possessions are much less likely to be the subjects of sinister passion than the inhabitants of a single town or country.¹²

Venice was not America; the agents of the republic were not, in reality, responsible to the people; and the United States were not a city-state, with its "sinister passions." Whether, in our day, Cooper would uphold his contention that a great republic is better than a small, we may doubt; but he might properly maintain that our great republic has acquired in actuality the characteristics of a small state, bound together by the speed of communication and the

dubious blessings of an intricate economy. Letters to congressmen can be as potent for good or evil as was the mob of fishermen of the Lagunes. It was against a Leviathan government that Cooper warned in *The Bravo*; and a Leviathan government he would consider ours. Concerning the Venice of this novel and what probably would be his opinion of our America, Cooper might quote appropriately the words of Cicero, in *The Republic*:

But our age . . . having received the commonwealth as a finished picture of another century, but one already beginning to fade through the lapse of years, has not only neglected to renew the colors of the original painting, but has not even cared to preserve its original form and prominent lineaments.

Prominent in the political philosophy expressed in this novel is Cooper's attack on the asserted sanctity and infallibility of the state—a doctrine which certainly has had its renaissance in this world of ours, and has had its literary rebirth, too, in a newer literary Caesarism of professed democrats—witness the books of André Malraux. Venice is a stabilized state, in which the principles of authority cannot be questioned, and in which the possessors of authority never tire of recounting its perfections. As Signor Grandenigo, one of the Council, tells Jacopo:

There is a beauty and a harmony in the manner in which the social machine rolls on its course, under such a system, that should secure men's applause! Justice administers to the wants of society, and checks the passions with a force as silent and dignified as if her decrees came from a higher volition. I often compare the quiet march of the state, contrasted with the troubled movements of some other of our Italian sisters, to the difference between the clatter of a clamorous town, and the stillness of our own noiseless canals.¹³

¹² *The Bravo*, pp. iii-iv.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

Cooper did not call such praise of the state hypocrisy; the recipients of the favors of such a government were self-deluded. Of Grandenigo, he wrote:

To him Venice seemed a free state, because he partook so largely of the benefits of her social system; and, though shrewd and practiced in most of the affairs of the world, his faculties, on the subject of the political ethics of this country, were possessed of a rare and accommodating dullness. A senator, he stood in relation to the state as a director of a moneyed institution is proverbially placed in respect to his corporation: an agent of its collective measures, removed from the responsibilities of the man. He could reason warmly, if not acutely, concerning the principles of government, and it would be difficult, even in this money-getting age, to find a more zealous convert to the opinion that property was not a subordinate, but the absorbing interest of civilized life. He would talk ably of character, and honor, and virtue, and religion, and the rights of persons, but when called upon to act in their behalf, there was in his mind a tendency to blend them all with worldly policy, that proved as unerring as the gravitation of matter to the earth's centre.¹⁴

In this age of ours, in which the leveling principle has reached a point far beyond that it attained in Cooper's day, enemies to Cooper's own political thought may call Grandenigo but an unconscious Cooper, writ a little larger; and there is some resemblance between this hostile portrait of the Venetian and the mind of Cooper—in the perspective of our time, at any rate—particularly when we think of Cooper's advocacy, in the anti-rent novels, of the rights of landed proprietors. But degree sometimes is as vast a difference as is kind, and, moreover, Cooper really did differ in kind, for he was not an aristocrat, in the sense of Aristotle's and his own definitions, but a democrat, believing that the exercise of power should remain in the hands of the mass of the population. Cooper's attacks on the aristocratic principle are

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

frequent in the pages of *The Bravo*; in chapter xi he relates in some detail the nature of the Venetian state and comments upon it:

It may be taken as a governing principle, in all civil relations, that the strong will grow stronger and the feeble more weak, until the first become unfit to rule or the last unable to endure. In this important truth is contained the secret of the downfall of all those states which have crumbled beneath the weight of their own abuses. It teaches the necessity of widening the foundations of society until the base shall have a breadth capable of securing the just representation of every interest, without which the social machine is liable to interruption from its own movement, and eventually to destruction from its own excesses. . . .

An aristocracy must ever want the high personal feeling which often tempers despotism by the qualities of the chief, or the generous and human impulses of a popular rule. It has the merit of substituting things for men, it is true, but unhappily it substitutes the things of a few men for those of the whole. It partakes, and it always has partaken, though necessarily tempered by circumstances and the opinions of different ages, of the selfishness of all corporations in which the responsibility of the individual, while his acts are professedly submitted to the temporizing expedients of a collective interest, is lost in the subdivision of numbers. . . .

The advances of the human intellect, supported by the means of publicity, may temper the exercise of a similar irresponsible power, in our own age; but in no country has this substitution of a soulless corporation for an elective representation been made, in which a system of rule has not been established, that sets at naught the laws of natural justice and the rights of the citizen. Any pretension to the contrary, by placing profession in opposition to practice, is only adding hypocrisy to usurpation.¹⁵

And such a government, added Cooper, tended to corrupt private morality, as well as public virtue:

The common opinion that a republic cannot exist without an extraordinary degree of virtue in its citizens, is so flattering to our own actual condition, that we seldom take the trouble to

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-48.

inquire into its truth; but, to us, it seems quite apparent that the effect is here mistaken for the cause. It is said, as the people are virtually masters in a republic, that the people ought to be virtuous to rule well. So far as this proposition is confined to degrees, it is just as true of a republic as of any other form of government. But kings do rule, and surely all have not been virtuous; and the aristocracies have ruled with the minimum of that quality, the subject of our tale sufficiently shows. That, other things being equal, the citizens of a republic will have a higher standard of private virtue than the subjects of any other form of government, is true as an effect, we can readily believe; for responsibility to public opinion existing in all the branches of its administration, that conventional morality which characterizes the common sentiment will be left to act on the mass, and will not be perverted into a terrible engine of corruption, as is the case when factitious institutions give a false direction to its influence.¹⁶

This surely is praise of democracy, and in keeping with Cooper's assertion, in *The Two Admirals*, that it is the legislators who are reluctant to do right, not the people;¹⁷ yet Cooper did not hold that despotic or aristocratic governments necessarily were inefficient or, in the actual administration of the law, unjust; their faults were not on the surface but deeper.¹⁸ Any government, he pointed out, which came to depend for its existence upon an assumption of its infallibility was a curse to the people; and although Cooper did not specifically state so, he implied that such a condition was not impossible in American democracy. The state of Venice demanded a victim, and Jacopo was chosen; the new member of the Council of Three, Signor Soranzo, was blinded by the mists of the bureaucracy, despite his desire to do justice; the pitying Doge was restrained from intervening by the necessities of the Leviathan government.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 361-62.

¹⁷ *The Two Admirals*, p. 3.

¹⁸ See his *Excursions in Italy*, II, 266.

As Jacopo tells the Carmelite:

"... I fear there is a morality in these councils which separates the deed of the man from those of the senators, putting policy before justice."

"This may be true, son; for when a community is grounded on false principles, its interest must, of necessity, be maintained by sophisms. God will view this act with a different eye!"¹⁹

The bloody conclusion is inevitable; the necessities of the state triumph; the bravo dies; and the thoughtless populace continues its doomed revelry.

The porticoes became brilliant with lamps the gay laughed, the reckless trifled, the masker pursued his hidden purpose, the cantatrice and the grotesque acted their parts, and the million existed in that vacant enjoyment which distinguished the pleasures of the thoughtless and the idle. Each lived for himself, while the state of Venice held its vicious sway, corrupting alike the ruler and the ruled, by its mockery of those sacred principles which are alone founded in truth and natural justice.²⁰

III

In *The Bravo* Cooper had exhibited as a warning the faults of a false republic; in *The Heidenmauer*, published the next year, he dealt with the passing of an old order and the coming of a new. As in *The Bravo*, both conservatives and liberals found in this novel a word for their cause.

This story, very similar to Scott's *The Monastery* and *The Abbot*, is too heavily laden with Cooper's own comments, and, although possessing at times vigorous scenes, it moves slowly and, in the latter half, almost aimlessly along, somewhat in the fashion of Scott's *Peperil of the Peak*. Near the end of this novel, Cooper summarizes its purpose, ably indicating, incidentally, the tack a historical or a social novel should take:

Our object in this tale is to represent society, under its ordinary faces, in the act of passing

¹⁹ *The Bravo*, p. 390.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

from the influence of one set of governing principles to that of another. Had our efforts been confined to the workings of a single and a master mind, the picture, however true as regards the individual, would have been false in reference to a community; since such a study would have been no more than following out the deductions of philosophy and reason—something the worse, perhaps, for its connection with humanity; whereas, he that would represent the world, or any material portion of the world, must draw the passions and the more vulgar interests in the boldest colors, and be content with portraying the intellectual part in a very subdued background.²²

The scene is the Palatinate, early in the sixteenth century, and the subject the destruction of a Benedictine monastery by the ambitious Baron Emich and his ally Heinrich Frey, the burgomaster of Durckheim; the growing influence of Lutheranism has begun to destroy both the spiritual and the temporal authority of the church, and the nobleman, desirous of power and lands, combines with the burgher, resentful of the demands of the monks, to crush the monastery of the Heidenmauer. Opposed to them are the worldly Abbot Bonifacius, the saintly Father Arnolph, and the fanatic Father Johan. It is the struggle—a doomed fight—of an old authority against a new school of thought and new economic forces; but though the author of *The Heidenmauer* criticizes harshly the old ways of the church, he does not eulogize the forces of change; the burghers of Durckheim find they have but exchanged the sovereignty of the monks for the sovereignty of the baron—King Log for King Stork—and the baron discovers himself none the richer for his efforts and perplexed by the problem of propitiating the church. The revolution has not satisfied the aspirations of its instigators. Cooper was generally hostile toward revolutionary movements and of-

ten expressed his opinion of the follies of the French upheaval.²³ He was no more friendly toward the Catholic church, however,²⁴ and, as a result, this novel analyzes the question of change with admirable impartiality, if with no great literary deftness. Cooper paints none of his characters as thorough villains: Bonifacius has courage, even though he is no fitting churchman; Emich is good at heart, although hasty and ambitious; the gentle piety of Arnolph compensates for the wild fanaticism of Johan; and Heinrich Frey is the embodiment of the mingled virtues and vices of the rising middle classes.

Cooper takes his stand on change early in the novel, when, after criticizing the church of the early years of the Reformation, he concludes, in terms applicable both to the church and the reformers:

However pure may be a social system, or a religion, in the commencement of its power, the possession of an undisputed ascendancy lures all alike into excesses fatal to consistency, to justice, and to truth. This is a consequence of the independent exercise of human volition, that seems nearly inseparable from human frailty. We gradually come to substitute inclination and interest for right, until the moral foundations of the mind are sapped by indulgence, and what was once regarded with the aversion that wrong excites in the innocent, gets to be not only familiar, but justifiable by expediency and use. There is no more certain symptom of the decay of the principles requisite to maintain even our imperfect standard of virtue, than when the plea of necessity is urged in vindication of any departure from its mandate, since it is calling in the aid of ingenuity to assist the passions, a coalition that rarely fails to lay prostrate the feeble defenses of a tottering morality.²⁴

Cooper paints a leader of the conservative faction of society—although

²² See, e.g., *The Wing-and-Wing*, pp. iii and 168.

²³ See *Mercedes of Castile*, p. 84.

²⁴ *The Heidenmauer*, pp. 65-66.

²¹ *The Heidenmauer*, p. 377.

temporarily converted into a radical of sorts, by his hostility to the church—in Heinrich Frey; he puts conventional defenses of the status quo into Frey's mouth, and then comments, ironically:

We have already said that Heinrich Frey was a stout friend of the conservative principle, which, reduced to practice, means little more than that—

"They shall get, who have the power,
And they shall keep, who can."

Justice, like liberty, has great reservations, and perhaps there are few countries, in the present advanced condition of the human species, that do not daily employ some philosophy of the same involved character as this of Heinrich, supported by reasoning as lucid, irresistible, and nervous.²⁵

But this does not mean that Cooper was an enthusiast for progress, a devotee of change; he remarks the inconsistencies of reformers and the numerous follies of movements of reform, and concludes:

Fortunately, all that is thus gained on sound principles is apt to continue, since whatever may be the waywardness of those who profess them, principles themselves are immutable, and when once fairly admitted, are not easily dispossessed by the bastard doctrines of expediency and error.²⁶

While the process of change, then, may be far from admirable, still many results of change may be praiseworthy. Cooper finishes his novel:

Our object has been to show, by a rapidly-traced picture of life, the reluctant manner in which the mind of a man abandons old to receive new, impressions—the inconsistencies between profession and practice—the error in confounding the good with the bad, in any sect or persuasion—the common and governing principles that control the selfish, under every shade and degree of existence—and the high and immutable qualities of the good, the virtuous, and of the really noble.²⁷

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

Spiller writes of *The Heidenmauer*:

In thus showing the effect of Lutheranism in liberating the mind of man from superstition, and the social order from corruption and hypocrisy, Cooper draws an obvious parallel to his own time in the effect of the American ideal in liberating the modern mind from the corruption of a world controlled by the ancient régime. He does not state this in so many words, however, and there is small reason to suppose that anyone in his own day understood the point of his conclusion.²⁸

But *The Heidenmauer* is more than a mere eulogy of American reforms; it also is a warning against the motives of many advocates of change and of the unexpected results of innovation. Contrary to Spiller's statement, Cooper specifically refers to the parallel with America and apologizes for what may seem American vanity;²⁹ and the controversy this book and its companion novels aroused in Cooper's day proves that its implications were understood by a good many.

The Heidenmauer has not the moving power as a novel or the memorability as a social treatise that *The Bravo* possesses; nevertheless, it is worth reading as one of the few thoughtful studies in fiction of how an old order passes.

IV

In *The Headsman*, published in 1833, Cooper resumed the consideration of the misuse of republican institutions—or rather, of institutions masked by the name "republican." Although this novel possesses a theme of considerable interest, and some scenes are portrayed with skill, toward the end it fails, trailing away into the old, old problem of the missing heir, with half of the procession of characters turning out to be either the father

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 220.

²⁹ *The Heidenmauer*, pp. 54-55.

or the son of some stranger; it cannot be compared to *The Bravo* and, in unity of purpose, is not equal even to *The Heidenmauer*. In addition to the study of the perversion of republicanism, there is present in the story the problem of hereditary duties, the spirit of caste. The scene this time is in Switzerland, in the eighteenth century; the Headsman is the hereditary public executioner of Berne; his son, Sigismund, is in love with a young lady of rank, but, although his parentage has been kept secret, he will not marry her, with the disgrace of his birth and the threat of having to assume, some day, his hereditary office. These characters, with a great many others, travel through Switzerland into Italy, and become involved in a great many complications; and the problem never is resolved, although Sigismund is saved from his plight by the discovery that he is in truth the son of the disguised Doge of Genoa, not of Balthazar the headsman. For Spiller to say the "the corruptions of the old order are resolved in the purifying atmosphere of the Bernese Alps" is an error. The institutions of Berne and Vaud remain unchanged, and Balthazar goes back to his dreadful task.

Here, once more, is the problem of a stabilized and stratified social order, in which institutions are free in name only, and in which power has slipped by degrees from the hands of the people into the hands of the government—another warning to America. The Swiss cantons were not, in reality, democracies, but aristocracies, with power possessed by the few; and the citizen was deprived of his freedom by tradition and authority. *The Headsman* is an assault upon special privilege in government, which Cooper saw developing in the United States. An aristocracy, said Cooper, was a curse even to itself:

Wealth has its peculiar woes; honor and privileges pall in the use; and, perhaps, as a rule, there is less of that regulated contentment, which forms the nearest approach to the condition of the blessed of which this unquiet state of being is susceptible, among those who are usually the most envied by their fellow-creatures, than in any other of the numerous gradations into which the social scale has been divided. He who reads our present legend with the eyes that we could wish, will find in its moral the illustration of this truth; for, if it is our intention to delineate some of the wrongs that spring from the abuses of the privileged and powerful, we hope equally to show how completely they fall short of their object, by failing to confer that exclusive happiness which is the goal that all struggle to attain.³⁰

Cooper satirizes hereditary special privilege in the person of Peter Hofmeister, bailiff of Vévey, and puts into the mouth of Gaetano, the disguised Doge, a denunciation of hereditary distinctions. At times the latter's utterances seem to approach the doctrines of Rousseau, and such a stand is perhaps a dangerous one for a Doge of Genoa or a Cooper of Cooperstown; the great landholders of New York were, in a sense, the possessors of special hereditary privilege guaranteed by a government which would assist a young Littlepage in expelling an old Thousandacres from his mill; but Cooper probably would have had an answer to this objection, for he would have maintained, with Ricardo and against Henry George, that the landlords fulfilled a useful social function.

The bailiff of Vévey expounds the authoritarian theory of government, in contrast with American principles:

"The object of all authority is to find the means of its own support," continued the bailiff; "for unless it can exist, it must fall to the ground; and you all are sufficiently schooled to know that when a thing becomes of indifferent value, it loses most of its consideration. Thus

³⁰ *The Headsman*, p. 31.

government is established in order that it may protect itself; since without this power it could not remain a government, and there is not a man existing who is not ready to admit that even a bad government is better than none. But ours is particularly a good government, its greatest care on all occasions being to make itself respected, and he who respects himself, is certain to have esteem in the eyes of others. Without this security we should become like the unbridled steed, or the victim of anarchy and confusion, ay, and damnable heretics in religion."³¹

For many a modern advocate of absolutism in government this would be too faint praise. The bailiff continues:

"This is a free government, and a fatherly government, and a mild government, as ye all know; but it is not a government that likes reading and writing; reading that leads to the perusal of bad books, and writing that causes false signatures. Fellow-citizens, for we are all equal with the exception of certain differences that need not now be named, it is a government for your good, and therefore it is a government that likes itself, and whose first duty it is to protect itself and its officers at all hazards, even though it might by accident commit some seeming injustice."³²

Such was Cooper's opinion of special privilege, as displayed in the cantons of Switzerland. Cooper assailed the stabilized state divided into orders and classes; America in his day had not reached that stage, territorially, economically, or socially, but he dreaded its coming. It has been reserved for us to witness the beginning of that process of social stratification and restriction, and many a student of politics in this era would hold with Cooper that real liberty

cannot endure in a society confined to narrow limits by its government, its economy, and its intellect.

Although the problems of society are discussed in almost all of his later works, in none of them did James Fenimore Cooper more ably analyze the dangers in government than in these three novels with a European setting; and in one of them he was able to combine literary talent with a political moral sufficiently well to make a memorable contribution to American literature. Maria Edgeworth could write the social novel and the moral tale better, within limits, than could Cooper; Scott made his point more gracefully; but, if we except Brackenridge's satires, Cooper was the first American to use fiction as a weapon for political criticism, and, considering the loftiness of his aims, his success was considerable. In his European stories, he struck resolute blows at tyranny in the guise of liberty and offered America a warning which this nation heeded little. Cooper never was the man to win disciples; privately and publicly he antagonized those he encountered; but if he gave no quarter, neither did he ask mercy, and he upheld American virtues as uncompromisingly as he denounced American vices. He was not always profound in his thought; in his economics, particularly, flaws may be discerned. But there are few democrats and lovers of freedom today who will deny the clarity of his vision or maintain that his voice was not nearly as prophetic as Cassandra's, even if it was sometimes as annoying.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 240-41.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 242.

The Growth of Thoreau's Reputation

RANDALL STEWART¹

IT is indeed remarkable that, after having remained at a very low level during his lifetime and with little modification as late as the second decade of the present century, Thoreau's reputation as a writer should have risen during the last two or three decades to a position of exalted eminence; remarkable that, after having been consigned pretty generally to the place of "Minor Transcendentalist" for three-quarters of a century, Thoreau should now as generally be recognized as one of the five or six great American writers. It may be of interest, first, to trace the history of his reputation and, second, to suggest some of the reasons for his recent fame.

I

Neither *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) nor *Walden* (1854)—the only books by Thoreau published during his lifetime—was a success from the commercial standpoint: printed in editions of one thousand copies, neither book required a second printing until after the author's death.² I don't know how many copies of *Walden* were sold while Thoreau lived; but in 1853, four years after publication, only

219 copies of *A Week* had been exchanged for money, for on October 28 of that year the author made the following entry in his Journal:

For a year or two past, my *publisher*, falsely so called, has been writing from time to time to ask what disposition should be made of the copies of "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers" still on hand, and at last suggesting that he had use for the room they occupied in his cellar. So I had them all sent to me here, and they arrived to-day by express, filling the man's wagon—706 copies out of an edition of 1,000 which I bought of Munroe four years ago and have been ever since paying for, and have not quite paid for yet. . . . Of the remaining two hundred and ninety odd, seventy-five were given away, the rest sold. I have now a library of nearly nine hundred volumes, over seven hundred of which I wrote myself.

Reviews have a good deal to do with the sale of books, and Thoreau was not very fortunate in his reviews. Of the seven contemporary notices reprinted by S. A. Jones in his *Pertaining to Thoreau*, only one would be satisfactory to an author. It was by Alcott, and it appeared one month before Thoreau's death. The other reviews were unsympathetic, even hostile. A Christian minister objected strenuously to Thoreau's pantheism. A literary critic condemned his egotism: "The I," he said, "stretches up tall as Pompey's Pillar over a flat and sandy expanse." Another reviewer called Thoreau a "humbug," considering P. T. Barnum's *Autobiography* and *Walden* together under the title "Town and Rural Humbugs." Still others objected to Thoreau's misanthropy: to a New

¹ Professor of English, Brown University, and editor of *Hawthorne's Notebooks*. The paper was read before the Friends of the Library of Brown University.

² It is possible that the printing of the rare 1862 *Walden* was begun before Thoreau's death. For this information, as well as for other assistance in the preparation of this paper, I am indebted to Mr. Albert E. Lowmes and Professor Leicester Bradner.

York reviewer he was "a Yankee Diogenes" and to an English reviewer, "an American Diogenes." A pantheist in religion and a cynic in society, he was not to be taken seriously as a writer, despite a minute and delicate appreciation of nature, for which he was generally given some credit.

Emerson's essay, read at Thoreau's funeral and later published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, contributed something to a fairer view. Besides praising his extraordinary knowledge of nature, Emerson extolled Thoreau's personal virtues—his integrity, his high ideals. "The country knows not yet how great a son it has lost," he declared. And yet in the same essay Emerson reinforced some of the old prejudices. Thoreau was cold: "As for taking his arm, I would as soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree." He was opinionated: "His first instinct on hearing a proposition was to controvert it—a habit a little chilling to the social affections." He didn't join the great procession of those who were trying to get on in the world: "I cannot help counting it a fault in him that he had no ambition. Wanting this, instead of engineering for all America, he was the captain of a huckleberry party." These were the alleged faults which less informed and less intelligent observers than Emerson had been emphasizing in the public press.

Emerson's equivocal service to Thoreau's reputation was completely eclipsed three years later (in 1865) by Lowell's essay in the *Atlantic*, the importance of which in the history of Thoreau's reputation can hardly be overestimated. Lowell enjoyed an enormous prestige as arbiter of literary matters in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the whole weight of his prestige was thrown into the scale of adverse criticism of Thoreau.

Lowell objected to what he called Thoreau's conceit, his intellectual selfishness, his perversity of thought, his morbid self-consciousness. Here are a few of his strictures:

Mr. Thoreau seems to me to insist in public on going back to flint and steel, when there is a match box in his pocket which he knows very well how to use at a pinch. . . . A greater familiarity with ordinary men would have done Thoreau good by showing him how many fine qualities are common to the race. . . . It is a morbid self-consciousness that pronounces the world of men empty and worthless before trying it. . . . Thoreau's whole life was a search for the doctor. . . . Solitary communion with Nature does not seem to have been sanitary or sweetening in its influence on his character. On the contrary, his letters show him more cynical as he grew older.

Lowell, the Harvard professor, the affable, urbane man of the world, was incapable of doing justice to the author of *Walden*.

Lowell's unfavorable verdict was strongly confirmed in popular acceptance by Robert Louis Stevenson's essay, published in 1882. And here are some of Stevenson's animadversions:

Thoreau is dry, priggish, and selfish. . . . He did not wish virtue to go out of him among his fellow-men, but slunk into a corner to hoard it for himself. . . . He left all for the sake of certain virtuous self-indulgences. It is true that his tastes were noble; that his ruling passion was to keep himself unspotted from the world; and that his luxuries were all of the same healthy order as cold tubs and early rising. But a man may be both coldly cruel in the pursuit of goodness, and morbid even in the pursuit of health. . . . In one word, Thoreau was a skulker.

Lowell and Stevenson were names to conjure with at the turn of the last century, and the two essays combined to depress Thoreau's reputation for many years.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century there were several writers who

attempted to present Thoreau favorably to the world. His Concord friend and neighbor, William Ellery Channing, wrote in 1873 an original and suggestive book, entitled *The Poet Naturalist*. The title was a happy one and gave us what is still perhaps the best single phrase to describe Thoreau. H. S. Salt, an Englishman, wrote in 1890 a well-balanced and sympathetic biography, which many regard as still the best *Life*. And there were active, belligerent disciples, who, like some of Whitman's disciples, engaged in guerrilla skirmishes against a strongly intrenched foe. Notable among these was Samuel Arthur Jones of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Jones published an attack on Lowell, in which, after quoting one of Lowell's indictments, he bluntly declared: "I seriously question if any literature contains a more pitiful ineptitude." He wrote an attack on Stevenson, which remains unpublished in a private collection. In addition to taking pot shots at the demigods of criticism, Jones made at least two worth-while contributions to the scholarly study of the subject: in 1894 he brought out a *Bibliography of Thoreau with an Outline of His Life*; and in 1901 he published the useful collection of contemporary reviews from which I have already quoted.

But the efforts of Channing, Salt, Jones, and other writers friendly to Thoreau made little impression upon the literary authorities. The most distinguished literary critic writing in America in the first decade of the twentieth century—W. C. Brownell—did not include Thoreau in his volume of erudite and incisive criticism entitled *American Prose Masters*, published in 1909: Brownell's American prose masters were Cooper, Hawthorne, Emerson, Poe, Lowell, and Henry James. The most influential literary historian in the same decade—

Barrett Wendell of Harvard—lumped Thoreau with Alcott, Channing, and others in an omnibus chapter entitled "The Lesser Men of Concord."

The change—a part, doubtless, of the new literary renaissance—came in the 1910's, when Thoreau was for the first time elevated, "officially," from the category of miscellaneous *minor* authors to the rank of a *major* figure. John Macy pointed the way in 1912 to a fresh evaluation in his *Spirit of American Literature*. Norman Foerster in 1916 included Thoreau in his collection of the nine *Chief American Prose Writers*. And the editors of the *Cambridge History of American Literature*—W. P. Trent, John Erskine, Stuart Sherman, and Carl Van Doren—in 1917 gave Thoreau separate treatment in their standard and influential history.

Since 1917, Thoreau's reputation has grown with amazing rapidity, and it is hardly possible here to do more than mention a few of the more important books; a complete list of the books and articles which have appeared in the last twenty-five years would fill a stout volume, and perhaps only Professor Raymond Adams, of the University of North Carolina, could conveniently muster the information necessary for such a bibliography.

In the 1920's Thoreau's fame was spread—to name only a few works—by Leon Bazalgette's *Henry Thoreau Sauvage*, translated by Van Wyck Brooks (it has always helped an American writer's reputation at home to know that he has created a stir abroad); by J. Brooks Atkinson's *The Cosmic Yankee* (the judicious dramatic critic of the *New York Times* could hardly be accused of being a crank); and by Vernon Parrington's laudatory treatment in his history of the growth of liberal American thought. The

further spread of our author's fame in the 1930's was indicated by the facts—among many other phenomena of like import—that Mr. Canby's biography was for many weeks on the nation's best-seller list and that inexpensive reprints of *Walden* in the "Modern Library," the "Penguin Library," and other popular editions were displayed on almost every counter in America.

At the end of the between-the-wars period, Concord, Massachusetts, in the mid-nineteenth century was seen more and more as the heart of the *Flowering of New England* (another best-seller in the 1930's)—more and more as the Golden Age of American thought and expression. And in this Concord of the Golden Age, Thoreau was no longer one of the "lesser men," as Wendell had reported. He was one of the greater men, perhaps even the very greatest, for the view was held by some that Thoreau had eclipsed the Master himself!

II

Having surveyed the history of Thoreau's reputation from its humble beginnings to its present high estate, we may now proceed to the question: How shall we account for this great upsurge during the last quarter of a century? And here we must pass from fact to conjecture, for the four reasons which I am about to propose are mere guesses.

The first reason is the modern demand for an effective and an efficient prose. Artificial prose and elaborate rhetorical patterns and embellishments are no longer admired as they once were. The requirement today seems to be that the thing be said as simply and directly as possible. Well, the discovery was made that Thoreau at his best had a remarkable simplicity and directness. I say "at his best," because he is not everywhere

the same; even in his mature writing there are remnants of an artificial rhetoric, which he never quite succeeded in removing, although he tried hard to do so. "By what long discipline and at what cost," he exclaimed in 1851, "a man learns to speak simply at last."

There are many excellent passages on the subject of good writing in Thoreau's works. He would remove all "palaver" and "idle eloquence." He developed the odd theory that manual labor made for better writing:

He will not idly dance at his work who has wood to cut and cord before nightfall in the short days of winter; but every stroke will be husbanded, and ring soberly through the wood; and so will the strokes of that scholar's pen, which at evening record the story of the day, ring soberly yet cheerily on the ear of the reader, long after the echoes of his axe have died away. The scholar may be sure that he writes the tougher truth for the calluses on his palms. They give firmness to the sentence. . . . We are often struck by the force and precision of style to which hard-working men, unpracticed in writing, easily attain when required to make the effort. As if plainness and vigor and sincerity . . . were better learned on the farm and in the workshop than in the schools. The sentences written by such rude hands are nervous and tough, like hardened thongs, the sinews of the deer, or the roots of the pine. . . . A sentence should read as if its author, had he held a plow instead of a pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight to the end.

Modern writers, I suppose, have not taken Thoreau's prescription of manual labor too literally; but readers have been impressed more and more by the extraordinary energy and directness of his writing—seen, for example, in the passage just quoted. A distinguished critic recently declared: "At his best, Thoreau wrote the most vigorous and pithy prose in American literature."

Another reason for Thoreau's growing prestige is to be found, I think, in the urbanization of American life. This proc-

ess, to be sure, had been going on apace ever since the Civil War, but it was greatly accelerated in the 1920's, when, as never before, the farms were depopulated, the cities overcrowded. So long as life was predominantly rural, there was nothing particularly wonderful about partridges and squirrels, ponds and the fishes therein, loons and owls. Nature lay all about us. But in an age of skyscrapers and apartment houses, we felt a nostalgic longing for the woods, a compensatory need for a return to nature. The need could be satisfied vicariously by writings about nature, and Thoreau was by far the best of our nature-writers. "I rejoice that there are owls," Thoreau said, and his nature-starved readers in the twenties rejoiced with him. And well they might, for Thoreau's descriptions of owls (and of other animals as well) are the most remarkable, I venture to say, to be found in any language. This, for example, of the barred owl:

One afternoon I amused myself by watching a barred owl sitting on one of the lower dead limbs of a white pine, close to the trunk, in broad daylight, I standing within a rod of him. He could hear me when I moved and crouched the snow with my feet, but could not plainly see me. When I made most noise he would stretch out his neck, and erect his neck feathers, and open his eyes wide; but their lids soon fell again, and he began to nod. I too felt a slumberous influence after watching him half an hour, as he sat thus with his eyes half open, like a cat, winged brother of the cat. There was only a narrow slit left between their lids, by which he preserved a peninsular relation to me; thus, with half-shut eyes, looking out from the land of dreams, and endeavoring to realize me, vague object or mote that interrupted his visions. At length, on some louder noise, or my nearer approach, he would grow uneasy and sluggishly turn about on his perch, as if impatient at having his dreams disturbed; and when he launched himself off and flapped through the pines, spreading his wings to unexpected breadth, I could not hear the slightest sound from them. Thus, guided amid the pine boughs

rather by a delicate sense of their neighborhood than by sight, feeling his twilight way, as it were, with his sensitive pinions, he found a new perch, where he might in peace await the dawning of his day.

The passage is remarkable for the establishment of reciprocal relations between Thoreau and the owl and the assumption of the owl's point of view concurrently with his own. Nothing could be more irrelevant, in this connection, than the question of Thoreau's contribution to science, for the experience recorded here transcends scientific knowledge.

Still another attraction which readers in recent years have felt in Thoreau may be explained in terms of "depression psychology." During the great depression, people discovered that they would have to get along on less money. The example of Thoreau seemed apropos, for he was a man who enjoyed life—indeed, got what he most wanted out of life—on very little money. In his chapter "Economy" in *Walden* he showed by itemized statements that his house cost \$28.12 and that he spent for food over a period of eight months \$8.74. "There is a certain class of unbelievers," he wrote, "who sometimes ask me such questions as, if I think I can live on vegetable food alone; and to strike at the root of the matter at once—for the root is faith—I am accustomed to answer such, that I can live on board nails." "No man ever stood the lower in my estimation," he declared, "for having a patch in his clothes." The meaning of *Walden* for many readers was a wholesome lesson in simplification and expert management.

Mr. Canby emphasized this view when he wrote encouragingly in 1939:

If you wish to get married, if you love good wine, if you must live in a library, or go to Europe, or belong to a country club—these are merely the terms of your problem. The prin-

ciple is the same—simplify in what is not necessary for your content. . . . Thoreau's solution was to reduce his wants, grow beans for cash, build his house with his own hands, and be willing to be solitary as long and as much as solitude did him good. What is yours?

It seems to me doubtful if Thoreau would have liked Mr. Canby's interpretation. The business about good wines and country clubs strikes me as alien to the spirit of *Walden*. But Mr. Canby was seeking to encourage his readers in the midst of the great depression.

If shorn of its ritzy embellishments, however, Mr. Canby's point is valid. By eliminating the superfluities, we *can* better achieve the essentials. Thoreau wrote in the classic passage on the subject:

Simplicity! Simplicity! Simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds.

In an age of economic depression such doctrines were wholesome and heartening.

A fourth and final reason can be found in the modern aggrandizement of the state. It is hardly necessary to say that the most significant political development of the last twenty years has been the rise of authoritarianism in government or that the issue of man against the state has never been more crucial than at the present time. Thoreau took the side of man in this great contest, and many readers who have been dismayed by the emergence of Leviathan with jaws extended to swallow up all individual rights, prerogatives, and responsibil-

ities have turned to Thoreau as their friend and ally.

Foreseeing a hundred years ago the modern trend, Thoreau declared: "I heartily accept the motto, 'That government is best which governs least' and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically." He rebelled against the government which was waging war with Mexico to extend the territory of Negro slavery and, as a consequence, spent a night in the Concord jail. Shortly thereafter he wrote *Civil Disobedience*, first published in 1849, which has become a bible of protesting minorities. Mr. Canby tells, for example, of Gandhi's indebtedness to this work many years ago when he first met with a copy of it in London.

Thoreau took his stand for the private individual—his dignity, integrity, and autonomy. Alcott justly said of him: "He was the best republican citizen in the world—always at home, and minding his own affairs." The alleged services of government, Thoreau thought, had been greatly exaggerated:

This government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of the way. *It* does not keep the country free. *It* does not settle the West. *It* does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way.

He insisted upon the supremacy of the individual conscience:

Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. . . . There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to

recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly.

Some people have supposed that this kind of talk is un-American. If so, the meaning of Americanism has changed for the worse. Emerson, who understood the subject, said, "No truer American existed than Thoreau."

I have been trying to account for Thoreau's growing fame in the modern world and have brought forward four suggestions: that the modern emphasis upon efficient writing has resulted in a new appreciation of his "vigorous and pithy" prose; that the compensatory

need of nature in a nation of city dwellers has led to the discovery of his matchless colloquies with nature; that many readers, pinched by economic depression, have found wholesome lessons in his philosophy of economy; and that those who oppose the authoritarian state have been fortified by his insistence upon the rights and responsibilities of the individual citizen. But whatever the reasons—whether these or some others—the increasing prestige of Thoreau in recent years is a fact, which, according to my way of thinking, is a hopeful sign, for his doctrines, if sufficiently rooted in the America he loved, will help us to preserve the integrity of our own minds.

"We Look to the Future"

History is a one-way street. We may go on to better things, but not back. That does not of course mean that we cannot carry on with us the wisdom and beauty of the past. Without it we should have no clue to a blind and unprovided future. Moreover, no savage is so naked as the supposedly civilized man who throws away his heritage. But always our task is to go on from today, not yesterday.—HELEN C. WHITE, "We Look to the Future" (president's address) in *Journal of American Association of University Women*.

Lytton Strachey Improves His Style, 1904-22

CHARLES RICHARD SANDERS¹

THREE of Lytton Strachey's books are collections of writings first published in periodicals. These are *Books and Characters* (1922), *Portraits in Miniature* (1931), and *Characters and Commentaries* (1933). The last book, collected and edited by Strachey's brother, James Strachey, was published after Strachey's death in 1932. In it, writings dating from 1903 to 1928 are wisely republished without changes in the original texts. The other two books, however, the author himself saw through the press and was able to revise at will. The revisions made for *Books and Characters* are far more numerous and extensive than those made for *Portraits in Miniature*. They are also far more significant. Whereas in *Portraits in Miniature* the earliest essay was first published as late as September 15, 1923, *Books and Characters* contains a number of essays published early in Strachey's career. The earliest, "Shakespeare's Final Period," appeared in September, 1904; and seven others came before 1912, the date of Strachey's first book, *Landmarks in French Literature*. Only two essays in the whole book appeared later than *Eminent Victorians* (1918). There are few changes in these two essays, but in all the others there are a considerable number. For instance, in "Shakespeare's Final Period" eight passages are changed; in "The Poetry of Blake," thirteen; in "Racine," twenty-three.

It should be noted that when Strachey made his revisions for *Books and Char-*

acters, his fame had already been established by *Eminent Victorians* and *Queen Victoria* (1921), and his style had already reached its highest degree of proficiency. Hence a study of the revisions in *Books and Characters* provides us with an unusual opportunity for observing precisely what changes a mature literary artist deemed fit to make in his earlier work and thus for discovering much that is important in the development of his method, taste, and style.

What Strachey did not change, however, is fully as significant as what he changed. After all, since he was born in 1880, he was already in his early twenties in 1903 when he began to publish. There was naturally much in those early essays which the judgment of Strachey in 1922 could still confirm as good in style and as truly indicative of what came to be his characteristic points of view. His marked interest in style manifested itself when he was at Cambridge, which he entered in 1899. He has told us that he experienced great delight there in reading Sir Thomas Browne aloud and listening to "the splendid echo" of the syllables as he "rolled the periods of the *Hydriotaphia* out to the darkness and the nightingales through the studious cloisters of Trinity." Strachey's earliest publication—"Two Frenchmen" (October, 1903), republished in *Characters and Commentaries*—uses one of his favorite devices, that of beginning with a firecracker sentence, a sentence which in both substance and form indicates much that

¹ Duke University.

is to come: "The greatest misfortune that can happen to a witty man is to be born out of France."

In the early writings there were many such passages, suggesting the mind and method of the mature Strachey. But there was also much in them which the mature Strachey could not approve. The kinds of changes which he made before republishing them in *Books and Characters* are therefore well worth examining.²

First, there were relatively unimportant changes such as are made by almost all authors who have a chance to republish. Under this head, of course, comes the correction of typographical errors. Strachey quite naturally changes "shut himself into his bedroom" to "shut himself in his bedroom"; "Cato dotes upon a Cabbage" to "Cato dotes upon Cabbage"; and "not but for long" to "but not for long." He must have pounced upon "Italian friend" with some alacrity and wrenched it into its proper form—"Italian fiend." Likewise he corrects a rare slip in grammar so that "our poetry, our prose, and our whole conception of the art of writing has fallen" is restated with the verb in the plural. Occasional awkward or redundant phrases he corrects. "Of too much of modern criticism" becomes "of too much modern criticism." "Each knew well enough the weak spot in his own position" drops the "own." We may also note here the fairly frequent changes made necessary by new facts or a new perspective brought by time. "Mr. Sidney Lee" becomes "Sir Sidney Lee"; "Professor Raleigh" becomes "Sir Walter Raleigh"; "Mr. Morley" becomes "Lord Morley." "Mr. Gosse, in his new volume" drops the "new"; "Blake's po-

² Documentation for the revisions in *Books and Characters* will be found in a complete, page-by-page listing of them in my article "Lytton Strachey's Revisions in *Books and Characters*," to be published in *Modern Language Notes* during 1945.

etical works, lately published" drops the "lately." "Has discussed" and "has drawn" become "discussed" and "drew." Strachey omits from the beginning paragraph of "Voltaire and England" several references to the first World War which were in the original article of October, 1914.

Another kind of change which it was natural for him to make was that prompted by his desire to convert journalistic articles and reviews into literary essays. In "Racine," "Henri Beyle," "Voltaire and England," and "Voltaire and Frederick the Great" he either drops the conventional long footnote on the first page, carrying titles of books pertinent to the review article, or keeps only one reference. Further, the first version of "Shakespeare's Final Period" calls itself a "paper"; in the second it becomes an "essay." Likewise, in "Racine," Strachey changes "article" to "essay" in referring to his own writing; and then, quite humanly, to avoid a repetition of the word "essay" just two lines below, changes "Mr. Bailey's essay" to "Mr. Bailey's paper."

More important are the many changes in phrasing and diction prompted by considerations of accuracy and good taste. Some titles are changed: "The Poetry of Racine" becomes "Racine"; "The Tragedies of Voltaire" becomes "Voltaire's Tragedies." "Curious irrelevance" becomes "curious self-contradiction"; "vast and appalling effect" becomes "tremendous effect"; "great poet" becomes "extraordinary poet"; "could" becomes "would"; "a great park" becomes "an open forest"; "an abyss of mystery" becomes "the mysterious accent of fatality and remote terror"; "talk continuously flowed" becomes "talk continually flowed"; and "agricultural instruments" becomes "agricultural im-

plements." In "The Rousseau Affair" Strachey discovers a monotonous repetition of the word *Mémoires*, and wherever he can he substitutes such words as "work," "narrative," and "book." In at least one instance he reduces the alliteration: "lack of local colour" becomes "absence of local colour." In "Racine" he corrects a reference to a painting: David's "Apotheosis of Homer" becomes Ingres's "Apotheosis of Homer." He searches also for more apt similes. Defending Racine's failure to introduce "the whole pell-mell of human existence," he at first says that to complain of this failure is as irrational as "to find fault with Tintoretto for not painting with the scrupulosity of De Hooghe"; then he changes the comparison to read: "is as irrational as to find fault with a Mozart quartet for not containing the orchestration of Wagner." At times he corrects quotations from Shakespeare. After telling us that Hamlet "lugged the guts into the other room," he changes "other" to "neighbor," Shakespeare's exact word. After writing "an 'excellent reason,' which would have delighted that good knight Sir Andrew Aguecheek," he correctly substitutes "exquisite" for "excellent." If we may resort here to some of Strachey's own irreverence, we may note that he also decides to change the form of his own name. "Madame du Deffand," published in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1913, seems to be the first publication which he signed "Lyttton Strachey"; earlier work, including the book *Landmarks in French Literature*, is signed "G. L. Strachey."

Possibilities for making the paragraphing more effective are not overlooked by Strachey. In some instances he breaks up long paragraphs. More frequently he merges two comparatively short paragraphs into one. Thus, signifi-

cantly, the trend seems to be toward the long paragraph with its suggestion of scope, mass, and solidity. In the revised "Racine," an essay with which Strachey manifestly took great pains, the shortest paragraph—the first—has nineteen lines.

Considerations of economy and restraint count for much in the revisions. Unnecessary words are dropped; phrases are compressed; questionable, over-strenuous, or overbold passages are reworded or discarded altogether. "What the canons of poetry precisely were" drops "precisely." "An English popular painter" drops "popular." "The extraordinary pages of Nietzsche" drops "extraordinary." "Has made French scholarship one of the unique glories of European culture" profits in more ways than one from the omission of "unique." The whole first paragraph of "Voltaire and England" is trimmed and condensed. Self-conscious and wordy transitional phrases are thrown out when discovered. All the matter between the dashes is omitted from this passage concerning Beddoes: "this great poet—for, as I hope to show, he deserves no meaner title—has not only never received the recognition," etc. Likewise omitted are the words in parentheses in "Leonora's speech (too long to quote in full) ends thus." Strachey does not hesitate to drop a simile which may be in bad taste. Having written "To ask whether he [Racine] is better or worse than Shelley or than Virgil—is to attempt impossibilities; one might as well weigh the merits of cold salmon and a rose," in revision he drops everything after the semicolon. In some instances the omitted passages may be long, particularly if they seem tediously anecdotal, like the account of Beddoes' schoolboy escapades at Charterhouse in "The Last Elizabethan" and the story of Mme Geoffrin's naïve husband reading

the whole French *Encyclopedia* in "Sir Thomas Browne." A rather strenuous but unsuccessful effort to find vigorous, significant statements with which to end "Henri Beyle" in the earlier version calls for the use of the scissors in order to remove everything after the last live sentence and thus to avoid fanning the air and producing anticlimax. Strong statements may be toned down. In attacking Gosse's opinion about the influence of Browne upon Dr. Johnson, Strachey no longer says: "Nothing could be more superficial." He also decides not to imply that one of Sir Sidney Lee's ideas about Shakespeare is contrary to "common sense"; and in his statement that "Editors may punctuate afresh the text of Shakespeare with impunity, and even with advantage," he inserts "perhaps" before "even."

Not all his changes, however, are in the direction of economy and caution. Some are motivated by the desire for greater force and emphasis. Thus in "But there is another reason: the craving," the appositive is made more emphatic by the substitution of a dash for the colon. Likewise a more fully developed parallelism may increase the emphasis. To have grown familiar with Racine, he writes at first, "is to have learnt a new happiness, and to have discovered something exquisite and splendid, significant beyond the boundaries of art"; in revision he writes that it "is to have learnt a new happiness, to have discovered something exquisite and splendid, to have enlarged the glorious boundaries of art." On one occasion, at least, he feels justified in making a bolder statement than that of the earlier version: whereas he had written that "three hundred years hence" a literal translation of Voltaire's tragedy *Zaire* would not be holding the English boards, he

now ventures to reduce the time to "a hundred years hence." Probably, however, he knows that he is safe enough even so. At times he expands a passage to strengthen his argument, as he does in substituting full quotations for mere references in treating passages from *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*. Or he decides to provide additional information, such as is in the italicized words in "1736, when Voltaire was forty-two years of age, and when his fame as a dramatist was already well established." Finally, he may add a puckish trick, much in the manner of his mature biographical works. In its earlier form the following statement about Mme du Deffand did not contain the words between the dashes: "this old lady of high society, who had never given a thought to her style, who wrote—and spelt—by the light of nature," etc.

Thus the revisions that Strachey made for *Books and Characters* indicate that his sense of style and talent for writing began to manifest themselves in the first years of this century, long before the publication of *Landmarks in French Literature* in 1912, but that, in general, his skill and sense of effectiveness developed with time. In these revisions, moreover, we find abundant confirmation of the belief that Strachey belongs with the writers who have thought of writing as one of the fine arts, highly fascinating, something with which it is unquestionably worth while to take great pains. To study the revisions made for *Books and Characters* is to watch a talented and careful literary craftsman at work. We may be struck by the fact that he uses the tools that are ready at hand, the very tools which students learn about in the handbooks and rhetorics. They are good enough for him, but he likes them sharp. Generally speaking, therefore, his best writing is a mystery only in

the sense that the work of the medieval guild member was a mystery, that is, something that called for special knowledge, for practice and technical proficiency. To say this of Strachey is to emphasize the fact that in the age which produced Gertrude Stein and James Joyce he achieved his originality by assimilating and using, rather than by rejecting, the traditional devices of lucid English prose. Because he possessed real talent, in the use of these very devices

he found his freedom and asserted his individuality. Hence it was the combination of a fully communicative style with the virtues of mind which Strachey had—clear intelligence, mental vigor, devotion to books, ability to select, fund of metaphor, versatility of movement, dramatic instinct, sense of the ridiculous, and insight into character—that produced the unique Strachey, the pioneer Strachey, as well as the Strachey who worked in a noble tradition.

A Note on "Macbeth," Act II, Scene 1

PERRY D. WESTBROOK¹

IN A well-known speech near the beginning of the first scene of the second act in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Banquo says to his son Fleance:

Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;

Their candles all are out. Take thee that, too. A heavy summons lies like lead upon me, And yet I would not sleep; merciful powers, Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature Gives way to in repose!

(Enter Macbeth, and a servant with a torch)

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

Most readers agree, of course, that the purport of this speech is that Banquo has dreamed of murdering the King so that, according to the Witches' prophecy, Fleance will succeed to the throne of Scotland. But Banquo, being an essentially good man, is so horrified even by these dreams that he holds back from going to sleep, despite his great weariness, or "heavy summons." This generally accepted interpretation, in fact, seems so obvious that little more need be said about it.

But there is one question that has frequently arisen in my mind. Why does Banquo hand his sword and presumably his dagger ("Take thee that, too") to Fleance, only to demand the first of these weapons back again at the sound of Macbeth's footsteps? Frankly, the usual explanations found in footnotes to this passage do not convince me. It is undoubtedly true that the reason for Banquo's demanding his sword back again is that in his nervous condition, perhaps induced by insomnia, he is startled by the approach of Macbeth. But to show that Banquo was nervous Shakespeare did not need to have him give his sword to Fleance so that he could excitedly request its return. It would have been quite sufficient and much less puzzling to have Banquo display his nerves merely by drawing his sword in haste and trepidation. If Shakespeare were interested in making Banquo appear simply overwrought, he would not have bothered with this elaborate interchange of weapons between the father and the son. There must have been another and better reason for this business.

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It is often suggested that, since Banquo was about to go to bed, he gave Fleance the weapons as a preliminary preparation for slumber. But would a man as "jumpy" as Banquo relinquish his means of defense at a moment like that? After all, Macbeth's castle was an eerie place at midnight, and Banquo was in a condition to be susceptible to eeriness. Also, it is by no means certain that Banquo did intend to retire just at that moment. As a matter of fact, the next few lines indicate that his immediate objective was not to seek rest but to deliver to Macbeth a jewel that the grateful King was bestowing upon Lady Macbeth. In a word, these theories fail to explain convincingly why Banquo suddenly disarms himself at the one moment when most men would like to retain the secure feeling of a sword against their thighs.

I wish to present another explanation of this incident. It is my belief that Banquo handed his sword and dagger to Fleance because he was afraid that if he kept them he would use them on the King.

I do not mean that Banquo actually would have murdered the King, but that he was afraid that he would. Banquo was suffering from a guilty conscience because of his murderous dreams. He was appalled by the ideas that had entered his sleeping mind. He had become so afraid of his thoughts and dreams that he hardly dared go to bed and face for another night such an unexpectedly dreadful side of his nature.

Thus while at midnight Banquo is walking with his son in the castle court, he is suddenly overcome with the horror of what has been going on in the darker

recesses of his mind. He feels the sword and dagger by his side. He becomes obsessed with the idea that he might use these weapons on the King at this lonely hour. In a fit of self-distrust he thrusts the weapons upon Fleance, only to demand them back again when a real danger seems to present itself. "Hold, take my sword," he cries; not, "Here, take this," as would say a man leisurely undressing for the night.

Such sudden mistrusts of one's self in a given situation are common with normal people as well as the insane. Shakespeare did not need to be a Freudian psychologist to realize that there is almost no one on earth who has not at some time done something comparable to this act of Banquo's. Who has not, for a fleeting moment at least, shuddered at what he might do with a razor or shotgun that happens to be in his hands? Who has not at these uncomfortable moments wished to throw aside his tool of destruction—get it out of his strangely itching fingers?

Shakespeare's plays contain several instances of this morbid fascination exerted by lethal weapons on the human mind. To Hamlet in the prayer scene the very feel of the sword in his hand is so unnerving that he can bear to hold it for hardly an instant. On Macbeth, however, in the same scene we have been discussing, the vision of the dagger, first, and then the feel of his real dagger have the effect of bracing him for the deed. It is a sort of tactile hypnosis, which in un-bloodthirsty men like Banquo and Hamlet produces only fascinating horror but which in potential murderers like Macbeth is a necessary preliminary to murder.

Lectures and Notebooks

LEWIS WORTHINGTON SMITH¹

THIS article has almost inevitably a personal beginning. Not long ago a university worker in another field expressed to me the opinion that English, the language and the literature, was taught less efficiently than any other subject in the college curriculum. Without admitting the justice of what he said, I advanced a counterstatement to the effect that the teaching of literature was more difficult than that of other subjects. The teaching technique in the English field, I protested, made more demands upon the originality of the instructor.

More recently I made my regrets and apologies to a young woman student for having kept her busied upon something for me so late in the evening that she might not be able to make preparation for a class early the next morning. It did not matter, she assured me, because she did not need to take to the class anything but herself and her notebook. Clearly enough she would attend a professorial lecture, and her duty there would be merely that of an absorbing recipient. This may not have been a class in literature. I did not press inquiry in that matter and do not know. What I am most unhappily sure of, however, is that there is a great deal of teaching of literature by the lecture method.

There are some subjects in which teaching through lectures is important, often effective, and perhaps even inevitable. There is no excuse for teaching literature in that way. Except, perhaps, for the

presence in the classroom of a student body so large as to make any other method of procedure impracticable, it is without justification. The remedy for classroom pressure of that sort is the spending of more money for a larger teaching staff.

In the classroom, literature should be handled as a laboratory subject. If university presidents or deans of colleges of liberal arts do not know this, they should be told. If professors of English do not know it, for the sake of our American future as a body of thinking human beings they should be enlightened. A piece of literature, whether a poem, a novel, an essay, or a play, is something to be examined in the classroom, talked over, enjoyed as it may be, and evaluated as one of the transparencies through which life as a whole may be brought nearer to our human vision. This way of dealing with Shakespeare or Milton, Browning or Thomas Hardy, has a tendency to be objectively analytical. For that reason it may seem a little hard. Even if so much be granted, it could not be too clearly understood that analytical objectivity as a state of mind is one of the more important things that our colleges and universities are supposed to cultivate.

Moreover, it is not for the sake of the individual student alone or for the sake of the college or university that this state of mind should be a product of the higher education. It is important for the security of our American life as a whole. A republic or a democracy cannot be safe except as the individual citizens who com-

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pose it are able to reach rational conclusions with regard to the growing complexity of national, political, and social problems. A few days ago I stood before a rack of magazines at a newsstand. I should once have been surprised, and perhaps surprised only, at the array of astrological periodicals there displayed. Two of them I took away with me, shamefacedly, in order to have a glance at the present status of one of the current modes of mountebank chicanery. There must be a substantial clientele for these absurd devotees of delusion. Otherwise they could not pay their printers or secure allotments of paper in these days of shortages.

It is in the fact that, despite the money we spend on education, they have such a clientele that they are important. A society in which many of its members can be swayed by the study of horoscopes or by the pronouncements of a crazy numerology is a menace to itself. If we could look into the relations between Adolf Hitler and his astrologer, we might have some illuminating revelation with regard to the threat to political and social safety alike when and where anything like astrology may have an influence. No man given or assuming responsibility toward the world he lives in should be at the mercy of advice received from men of that sort.

There are three primary ends toward the achievement of which an educational process may properly be directed. One is that of encouraging the student to do his own thinking and to help him in doing it accurately and soundly. A second is that of filling his head with information accumulated during the ages and made of record for the uses and needs of the present hour. A third end is that of giving the student some training in doing things that may fit him for the activities in

which he may be engaged when he takes his place in the outer world.

As a corollary to these ends, it may well be added that the higher education should fit a man for enjoying life either as an active force in it or as an observer watching it go by. The study of literature, as of any of the arts, should naturally have this as an objective. Now how far this is subsidiary and derives from one or another of the three primary ends of an advanced education, either directly or contingently, is at once a question. One of the great sources of failure in the teaching of literature has been that of an assumption that the doling-out of information on literary subjects serves the educational purpose of the classroom. That understanding yields at once to the process of lectures from the chair and notebooks in the hands of students. It is a process excellently adapted to the German university classroom, to the indoctrination of the hearers of the lecture, and to their submissive acceptance of the program of their overlords.

Now this program is not the program for the democratic and individualistic American way of life. Our program is, and for the future more and more must be, that of emphasis upon the development of individual initiative in the young man who is to go out of college as a force in shaping our national and social future. We are now living in the riper days of what we know as the "Industrial Revolution." It was set going and in its first stages carried forward almost entirely by the English-speaking peoples. Their agency in this came from the individualistic initiative of their way of life. It is the discussion system in the classroom, not the lecture system, that cultivates initiative and frees the individual mind for its best contributions to the total of enlarging human experience.

It has been said, and wisely, that knowledge is power. In a democratic world it must be questioned not a little how far power should be delegated to anybody and everybody. We have been spending untold human energy in the waste of war materiel and millions of human lives devoted to the task of wresting power from a paranoiac. Power not checked and controlled by a reasoned judgment may be as dangerous as a powder magazine open to the careless toss of a burning cigarette. By the same token the disbursing of information simply as information is more than questionable as a form of social and political behavior.

Then again there is the young woman who said that she needed to take nothing to class but herself and her notebook. She was not going to class in the expectation of doing some thinking during the class hour; she would simply make notes and try to remember. Moreover, she had presumably done no thinking in preparation for the class. Thinking is not an essential prerequisite for sitting quietly before a lecturer and permitting what he says to soak in aurally and the way he looks when he says it, dull and lackluster or dogmatically assertive, to hold the focusing of the eyes.

For the lecture system so much will suffice, but the discussion system of class instruction calls for preparation on the part of the student. Perhaps for the instructor as well it calls for preparation beyond that needed for a set talk. At any rate, both the discussion itself and the preparation for it make it imperative for student and instructor alike to do some thinking. Whether stimulation to the mental processes of the student, the imparting of information, or the cultivation of skills is educationally the more important may be a matter of dispute at some educational levels. At the level of

higher education, however, the question is hardly an open one. The college and university student should be taught to think. When he leaves his college halls with a sheepskin, he will have to face new problems that will need not so much a store of knowledge as an alert mind habituated to the meeting of issues and to the establishing of some sensible judgments with regard to them.

There is probably no other subject in the curriculum in his approach to which the ordinary student may find himself so much at sea as that of literature. Understanding of what the writer is saying does not cover the matter. If he is a writer of any weight, the social and philosophical implications of what he says and the art with which he says it are all to be considered. How in any particular case the student is to reach critical judgments with relation to these things he will not know without some guidance before he enters upon the reading or as he reads. Judgments right or wrong, however tentative they may be, should have been reached before he can enter intelligently upon any group discussion. It is group discussion that should more and more have a place in the literature classrooms of our colleges and universities.

We have been hearing a great deal about bureaucracies, the regimenting of life, and the evils that come from them. There is no regimenting more dangerous to free institutions than the regimenting of the mind by the lecture system. The effectiveness of such regimentation in Germany had, for some long years, a kind of unholy fascination for American educators and the American public. That day should now certainly have gone by. We, the English-speaking people as a whole, have led world progress in invention and scientific discovery—the steam engine, the spinning jenny, the power

loom, the electric telegraph, the electric light, the telephone, the motorcar, the airplane—by reason of our freedom from regimentation of that kind. Such regimentation as we have been subject to has been that of the individual instruc-

tor, not that of a body of professors regimented themselves by a governing autocracy. Regimentation even of that scattered sort should be a thing of yesterday for America, not a thing of tomorrow.

A Practical Problem in Humane Education

JOHN MCGIFFERT¹

IN THE Preface to *Liberal Education* Mark Van Doren says: "I have considered my aim to be the practical one of stating what it is that education desires, and what in consequence its direction should be. I do not pretend to have mastered its details, most of which I leave to others along with such portions of my theory as they may deem worthy of criticism." Notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Van Doren can point to St. John's College as a working example of his basic principles, the book is, as his comment implies, an essay in theory. Many of us who think it to be sound theory must also be appalled by the nature and scope of the practical problems it suggests. Not least of these is one which Mr. Van Doren recognizes, but about which he may be unduly sanguine: "If the teachers are not yet liberal artists, they will have to become so. This will take time, but so will the entire enterprise; centuries may not be too long."

Here, it seems to me, is the crux of the problem of restoring and adapting liberal education as a vital force in modern civilization. For surely very few of those teachers who are convinced by Mr. Van Doren's argument and who accept his definitions can feel that they themselves are liberally educated. How are

they "to become so"? And how will it be possible for the well-qualified to teach a new generation when they have to buck strong opposition from both professional and layman? Mr. Van Doren insists that liberal education must be for all; but until competent faculties develop and adjust their differences, and until public opinion undergoes radical changes, we must be grateful for specific proposals that are practical for a limited number. And such proposals must be welcomed even if they vary in theory from the dogmatic views of Mr. Van Doren and the vigorous school of thought to which he belongs.

One such proposal was made in a book recently published in England, and available in this country only, I believe, through the "Books across the Sea" group in New York. *Education and the University*, by F. R. Leavis, not only offers an interesting outline for a practical scheme but also touches on many of the vital problems discussed by Mr. Van Doren. A professor of English literature and an extremely able critic, Mr. Leavis limits his frame of reference chiefly to his university, Cambridge, and to his field, the English Tripos.

The fundamental issue is stated in a quotation from Alexander Meiklejohn's *The Experimental College*, a book highly

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regarded by Mr. Leavis (and, rather surprisingly, not listed in the Bibliography of *Liberal Education*): "Our first aim is not to get liberal thinking done excellently, but to get it done at all. In a word, we must recognize that the drift of . . . life is against those forms of liberal thinking which seem most essential to its welfare." To get it done at all, Mr. Leavis thinks, may be less difficult at one of the ancient English universities than it will be in America. Much has been compromised at the universities, but they are still the representatives of a positive humane tradition. Since he assumes that there is sufficient agreement about ultimate values to make the discussion of sanctions unnecessary, Mr. Leavis is saved much of the argumentative justification of his premises that most Americans of similar views would find forced upon them. But in the first chapter, "The Idea of a University," to be compared with Mr. Van Doren's "Idea of a College," he anticipates the charge that he may be taking too much for granted by giving a brief clarification of his basic principles. He then goes on to his major purpose, that of showing how his doctrine can be made concrete in the study of literature. For the sake of convenience in relating it to *Liberal Education*, this doctrine may be considered under three interrelated headings: discipline, focus, and tradition.

The lack of discipline in curriculums and methods of instruction gives rise to one of the most cogent criticisms of the modern college. From this point of view the classics, English literature, and the "humanities" are all attacked by Mr. Van Doren. Greek and Roman masterpieces have been studied not as literature, but as language, and with increasing narrowness. "The great writers have not been read greatly." The same false emphasis

is found in the approach to English literature. Recently developed courses in the humanities are fine as far as they go; but the insistence by their champions that the influence of science must be counteracted has led to an erroneous assumption that liberal education is everything but science. Mr. Van Doren's conclusion is that science, with all its exclusions, still provides a sturdier discipline than any other isolated department. Not, of course, that it is by itself a liberal education. This can come only through a return to the specific disciplines of the trivium and quadrivium, and an integrated study of the great books in all fields.

Mr. Leavis, also aware of limitations in the old classical education, is primarily concerned with the absence of discipline in his own field of English literature. Cambridge has emancipated itself from the shackles of Anglo-Saxon and the linguistic approach (which he concedes, however, to have their value as a specialized study) but has established no adequate substitute. The emphasis on preparation for general questions on final examinations leads to a glib journalistic superficiality in those students who complete the course with high standing. There is no inculcation of the abilities to think and analyze and understand, no development of the all-important qualities of sensibility and intelligence. Unlike Mr. Van Doren, Mr. Leavis believes that there is no one solution but rather various partial and imperfect ones. The need is for methods of "cultural" instruction to replace the old "liberal arts." His own plan is a modest one. Content with a small number, it would still provide a center and a source of stimulus the results of which might be greater than the scale of the experiment.

This search for a focus is of the utmost

importance if any significant discipline is to be achieved. As Mr. Van Doren puts it: "Nobody today . . . finds in himself a reasonably deep and clear feeling about the bearing upon one another, and upon his own mind, . . . of art, science, and religion. He has never been at the center from which these radiate. . . . His education so far has been one-sided: mostly mathematical, mostly literary, or mostly something else." The corollary in other spheres to this confusion of mind is a modern commonplace. With the deflection of family and church as stabilizing influences, there is no central core of belief, no prevailing morality. But Mr. Van Doren does not want education to take over as conscious ethical guide; morality will follow, he thinks, if the intellectual disciplines are sufficiently vigorous and unified. The educator must see the "connectedness of things"; both he and the student must search for a center from which to view both new and old.

Mr. Leavis is emphatic along similar lines. In stressing the need for coherence, he refers to Dr. Meiklejohn's experiment at Wisconsin, where the different fields of knowledge were represented and the teaching force endeavored to have a real intellectual acquaintance with one another. Although the situation at Cambridge is less flexible, it also reveals less deterioration from a vital tradition than would probably be found in most American institutions. Yet the deterioration is serious. In spite of the desirability of provisions for bringing specialisms into communication, the pre-eminently necessary move (because it is practical) is, says Mr. Leavis, to create a center within a given school. This would be one concrete advance toward making the university what it should be:

"Amid material pressures and dehumanizing complications of the modern world, a focus of humane consciousness, a center where, faced with the specializations and distractions in which human ends lose themselves, intelligence, bringing to bear a mature sense of values, should apply itself to the problems of civilization."

The key words here are "mature sense of values." For Mr. Van Doren these values are to be found in the seven liberal arts and in the books of the great tradition. Few will quarrel with his conviction that both educator and student are insufficiently aware of our heritage and that they have too much knowledge about, and too little insight into, the finest contributions to human wisdom. On the other hand, crucial problems of an immediate nature are raised by Mr. Van Doren's prescription. Some of these are suggested by Dr. Meiklejohn in his review of *Liberal Education*. In rebuttal to the proposition that "science is knowledge and knowledge cannot be inhuman," he maintains with reason that "studies of non-human action are not 'humane' in the same sense as are the studies of human action"; and in connection with the seven liberal arts and the Great Books, "Which books shall we read? And why? Why so many? Why so few?" Mr. Van Doren has been accused of reactionary medieval scholasticism, a charge that is as unjust as it is misleading. Yet the gospel according to St. John's does carry with it a dogmatism which, whether to our loss or not, makes it suspect in this chaotic era.

Mr. Leavis recognizes the difficulty. "Society," he says, "should develop a sense of value informed by traditional wisdom. . . . But liberal education to meet the present crisis should not start with a doctrinal frame." Although the

particular frame he fears is that of religion, the thought has wider application. This is not the age of Dante, he continues, but of T. S. Eliot, who, in spite of the Anglo-Catholic aspiration of his poetry, cannot make direct use of a preconceived structure of ideas that was natural for Dante or Herbert. The education that will develop real order must, while seeking a center of significance, be tentative in spirit, as Eliot himself is in his poetry. Hence Mr. Leavis' realization that his own scheme, although entirely specific and based on a utilization of one tradition, is only one of many possibilities.

In "A Sketch for an English School" he finds a promising opportunity in Part II of the English Tripos at Cambridge, where the students who qualify for it have already "covered" English literature from Chaucer to the present day. He first attacks the present system: lectures (most of which can be found intact in reference books) and haphazard conferences; the all-important examinations which put such a premium on capsule knowledge and the ability to race against the clock; the curriculum—a special period of English literature varying from year to year. For these he would substitute: frequent planned and prepared discussions; investigation of various topics studied and reported on during the course and to be considered more significant than the examination, which would be oral; and—most important, for this is the heart of his program—the seventeenth century, not merely in literature, but as a whole.

Since Mr. Leavis is a disciple in criticism of T. S. Eliot, metaphysical poetry is probably the deepest reason for his choice of century. Yet he makes out a good case for it as a decisive key passage in the history of civilization, and there-

fore a profitable field for concentrated study as a focus of humane values. It is a complex century, in direct touch both with the world of Dante and with the world of today. As a starting-point, of course, the students would already know something of its rich literature through their work in Part I.

But what of the validity of literature as an approach to liberal education in the broader sense? Mr. Van Doren, who is, after all, a brilliant teacher of literature, admits that it is a means to something bigger than itself. Mr. Leavis believes that "one cannot be seriously interested in literature and remain purely literary in interest." His project would include a wide variety of topics for study, discussion, and writing; here are a few from his long list: "The Background in Religious History," "The Rise of Capitalism," "The New Science," and "Political Thought." To provide for the desirable knowledge of a cultural climate other than the English, he would include (in addition to the ranging through time and place that such subjects as those given above would necessitate) the study of Dante and a project in French civilization or literature. The most important essay of all would trace the process of change by which England of the seventeenth century turned into the England of today. Finally, reviews of current books in various fields would also be required.

This brief summary must leave the reader puzzled by many practical problems, chief among which would probably be concern as to how thoroughly such an ambitious curriculum could be dealt with in the time and with the facilities available. We must accept on faith, if we accept it at all, Mr. Leavis' assurance—based on his knowledge of the particular situation at Cambridge—that the

scheme is feasible. Another problem, however, he does deal with in detail in his concluding chapter and in two appendixes, entitled "Literary Studies," "T. S. Eliot's Later Poetry," and "How To Teach Reading." All three discussions are related to his belief that a vigorous discipline in the study of literature must already have been developed if the later work on the seventeenth century is to be a vital educational experience. "Literary Studies" deals with Part I of the *Tripes*, which he feels to be moderately effective even in its present form. He recommends, however, stricter attention to the work of literature itself (on this point he and Mr. Van Doren are in complete agreement); a study of the best examples of practical criticism, as opposed to the standard history of literary criticism, which gives little assistance in the actual art of reading for comprehension and discrimination; and numerous exercises in the analysis of metaphor and of poems of different periods. He would not isolate what Mr. Van Doren calls "the critic of effects" from "the critic of ideas." Although Mr. Van Doren concedes success on both levels to be "proper to the full analysis of art," he believes that a peculiar genius is required in the first case, whereas an educated humanity is sufficient in the second. Mr. Leavis is training both critics at once. His students—and it must be remembered that they are not, even ideally, all students at the college level

—could not approach "educated humanity," by their work in Part II, without first becoming critics of effects in Part I.

"The Later Poetry of T. S. Eliot" serves a double purpose: it provides a model of practical criticism of the kind Mr. Leavis would expect from the students at the end of Part I, and it illustrates and develops concretely his earlier contention as to the tentative spirit of Eliot's poetry and the poet's qualifications as a spokesman for our age. "How To Teach Reading" is an application of the principles of "Literary Studies" to particular works of literature. In this appendix Mr. Leavis' suggestions are so specific as to sound like actual excerpts from a teacher's course plan.

It is unfortunate that the paper shortage temporarily prevents such books as *Education and the University* from becoming well known in this country. It is a heartening sign, however, that the book was written at all. If men of the integrity and high purpose of Mr. Leavis and Mr. Van Doren continue the battle for a real education, and if enough of us pay heed, the differences in theory and in details may be comparatively unimportant. A Van Doren is essential if we are to know our limitations and our potentialities and our ultimate goals. A Leavis is a challenge and a hope when our limitations seem desperate and the goals overwhelmingly remote.

Current English Forum

Conducted by

THE NCTE COMMITTEE ON CURRENT ENGLISH USAGE

English Futures as Material for Observation

LINGUISTIC scholars who in any way have shown concern with problems of teaching language practices in English have more than once complained that what is taught about the language does not describe what is true about the language. In concluding his *American English Grammar*, which does describe what is true, Professor Charles C. Fries proceeds to argue therefor that the schools should base their teaching upon the actual facts of English. He then writes: "To be really effective a language program must prepare the pupil for independent growth, and the only possible means for accomplishing that end is to lead him to become an intelligent observer of language usage."

But even a linguist quite removed from the actual problems of teaching would not so unreservedly advocate the direct approach to language as to suggest that every secondary-school student or college freshman should formulate a complete descriptive grammar for himself, or even that each class, or each teacher, should do so. The student need not look at everything in order to become an intelligent observer; he needs only to learn how to look at some things. It is to be sought, not simply random and unrestricted, observation.

Of the language matters to which the attention of students can be directed for the purpose of developing intelligent observation of actual usage, none, it seems to me, are more useful than the expressions which English uses to convey the idea of futurity. This usefulness rests upon the great discrepancy between common belief and common practice.

Despite the disappearance of "formal" grammar from some schools, the dead hand of the traditional rules still seems to lie heavy upon the heads of students. Twenty-two students in a class in communication have just replied to my question, "How do we indicate future ideas in English?" with the answer, "The future tense"; and, further questioned, they showed that they meant only the future with *shall* and *will*. Nearly all asserted belief in the validity of the traditional distinctions between *shall* and *will* in the various persons, though only two or three admitted any attention to these distinctions in their own writing, much less in their speaking.

In the absence of any statistical survey and upon the basis of miscellaneous evidence at hand, I hazard the guess that this situation is typical. I am inclined to believe that most secondary-school students still not only yield credence to the notion that English has a future tense but even go so far as to honor in theory, though not in practice, the accompanying dogma about the distinctions between *shall* and *will*.

Now the teacher who as a pupil or as a subsequent college student has accepted these notions is in a position to secure the information, accumulated and interpreted by scholars, which explodes them. He may consult the pertinent sections of the scientific English grammars by Poutsma, Mätzner, Sweet, Curme, and Jespersen, if he has access to a large library. Or he may study the indispensable materials in Fries's *American English Grammar*, which he should own, or perhaps even go back to the detailed treat-

ments in Fries's two earlier articles.¹ He may also look at such other recent discussions as those by Dennis,² Herold,³ Luebke,⁴ and Rice,⁵ all of which contribute importantly to his understanding of the English future.

But the student who has yet to learn how to observe his language intelligently will not be sent to such sources of information. He, on the contrary, is told to record every kind of expression with future meaning as he reads it or hears it in living speech.

From a class so instructed, what information will be forthcoming? Each student will easily note instances of the periphrastic future expressions with the function words *shall* and *will*. But he is unlikely to hear any examples of *I shall* as "simple future," and he probably will find very few first-person uses in his reading. An editorial in a major newspaper may yield "We shall have to spend additional millions in research and experimentation," but on the next page a book critic will write, "We'll take you into the woods." When all the instances observed by the class are brought together, the likely conclusion is that in both spoken and written informal English *will* is a simple auxiliary word used to indicate futurity and that *shall*, when used, somehow suggests force and determination in all three persons. It may be concluded, further, that in some formal written English, however, there is a use of *shall* in the first person simply to express futurity. (At this point some teachers may wish to raise the question whether the writers of such English are not unusually

¹ "The Periphrastic Future with 'Shall' and 'Will' in Modern English," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XL (1925), 963-1024; "The Expression of the Future," *Language*, III (1927), 87-95.

² Leah Dennis, "The Progressive Tense: Frequency of Its Use in English," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, LV (1940), 855-65.

³ A. L. Herold, "The Future Tense in Modern English," *English Journal* (College ed.), XXV (1936), 670-77.

⁴ William F. Luebke, "The Analytic Future in Contemporary American Fiction," *Modern Philology*, XXVI (1929), 451-57.

⁵ Wallace Rice, "The *Am-To* Future," *English Journal* (College ed.), XXIV (1935), 153-55.

punctilious in conforming to the textbook rules.)

But the class will have noted other expressions which in one way or another point to future time. Some members will offer such examples as these:

Reformation day services are to be held Wednesday night at the Lutheran church.

A deputy sheriff, it was learned, is to be sent to Chicago to return the suspect for questioning here.

The ideas . . . are to be reacted upon.

Besides such instances of what Wallace Rice has called the "am-to" future, examples like the following will appear:

I am about to saw a lady in two. . . .

Apparently no basis existed for the rumor that Mayor — is about to proclaim a local emergency.

And pupils are certain to bring in a large number of quotations like these:

Car dealers are going to be more interested in doing business with a customer who has a car to trade in.

People who go shopping for them are not going to lack company.

Isn't it going to—well, make everything a lot more difficult for us?

All such instances will enable the students to set up a subclass of future expressions formed by *be*, with or without an additional function word, and an infinitive.

At the same time there will be brought in a somewhat different kind of expression such as:

We have to stay until ten.

Not very many have to take the examinations.

Or:

I got to keep in training.

He's got to keep his wits about him.

Or:

I must tell those who intend to become geographers—there is no living in it.

We must continue this new phase of the war.

To answer them the physicist must attempt to explain the two aspects of his science.

And even:

We need to say loudly and repeatedly that our children need a better education.

From all these the pupils will learn that various expressions, of necessity, carry by implication so much future meaning that it is difficult not to recognize them as primarily future and only secondarily, or formally, present. Similar expressions like *ought to*, *am obliged to*, *feel the need to*, may well be included in this group.

The class will discover also that various locutions which convey modal and aspectual connotations are nevertheless primarily future in temporal signification, and hence will wish to add phrasal futures with *would*:

It would give me something to do while you're away.

And with *should*:

A customer . . . who makes a rather determined effort should be able to buy a new car by late summer of next year.

And with *may* or *might*:

Nonpriority purchasers may be able to enter the market somewhat earlier.

And the students can easily class these as future expressions without needing to enter into the analysis of subtle modal distinctions.

Some pupils, especially if given a preliminary hint, will detect numerous examples of present-tense verbs used with obviously future meaning in a subordinate clause, as:

But even if the deficit is not made up fully, there is little danger of homes here going unheated.

Dock workers voted . . . to stay on strike until the government intervenes.

Whereupon a teacher may well draw from the class the inference that modern English lacks any exact correspondence between tense form and temporal meaning, an inference which perhaps the class itself will support further with examples of present forms or phrases so used in main clauses that the situational context alone reveals their future meaning:

What're we having for supper?

You're not leaving town.

Such instances may lead one or two students in a class to recognize then the future significance that can be borne by a periphrastic perfect. In this example, the intended time is actually future perfect:

When you have remembered your own first favorite, talk to other adults about the books they like the best.

By this time the class should have lost any belief in the actuality of an English future tense, should have acquired some awareness of the existence of a variety of linguistic devices for expressing future time in English, and should have had a valuable lesson in the inductive approach to language study—a lesson in that intelligent observation which Professor Fries insists must be taught.

H. B. A.

Summary and Report

"SUBJECTIVITY IN MODERN FICTION," by Marjorie Farber, appears in the autumn *Kenyon Review*. Miss Farber postulates that we have a dearth of good novels because novels require a sense of character, which our contemporary novelists lack. Today's novelists start from "a bold therapeutic assumption: 'I am a sick individual in a sick society. Let me tell you what I see and feel, so that you will understand your own sickness.'" But the trouble is that when he looks at other people, he looks only into a mirror of himself and ends by merely describing his own reactions.

MARJORIE BRACE, IN "THEMATIC Problems of the American Novelist," in the autumn *Accent*, arrives at similar conclusions. She remarks that the novel has been superseded "by an experimental mixture of autobiography, philosophy, and prose-poem" and thinks this is due to the fact that fiction depends more than other literary forms "on social values utilizable by the artist." It is not enough for a novelist to have keen sensibilities. He must create situations on a high level of awareness which "symbolize a general social emotion." On the other hand, the failure of the novelists is not all due to their own failings but indicates "an accelerated social neurosis," which perhaps means that what we need is a new insight into the qualities lacking in our society.

"STAGES OF AUDEN'S IDEOLOGY," by Randall Jarrell, is in the autumn *Partisan Review*. Jarrell is writing a book on Auden, and this is part of the book. In an involved discussion, Jarrell finds that Auden is earth-bound, shackled because he "is willing to devote all his energies and talents to finding the most novel, ingenious or absurd rationalizations of the cluster of irrational attitudes he has inherited from a former self." Auden's

work to date Jarrell divides into three stages. Stage I is characterized by anxiety and guilt, "fused in an isolated sexual core," consciously repelling or cowering under Authority. In Stage II anxiety dominates this core and attempts to mitigate guilt and isolation by reforming the Authority. In Stage III, anxiety, guilt, and isolation "are themselves the relations of Authority to the core; they are Grace." The end-result is, according to Jarrell, that Auden possesses "a hysterical blindness to his actual enemies and to the actual world."

IN "MYTH MAKERS AND THE South's Dilemma" in the fall *Sewanee Review*, Louis B. Wright takes to task contemporary writers, including Faulkner and Caldwell, who have made as much of a cult of portraying the Tobacco Road aspect of the South as earlier writers did of depicting the romantic, gay southern belle. Wright feels that the finding of solutions to social problems in the South has been set back rather than forward by this literary trend.

TWO ESSAYS WHICH HAVE APPEARED recently and caused much discussion are "Einstein's Atomic Bomb," in the November *Atlantic*, and Norman Corwin's editorial, "Modern Man Is Obsolete," in the *Saturday Review of Literature*. Corwin's editorial, much expanded, has already been reprinted in book form and is readily available. Both speak with authority in urging the need to speed the development of our social relations. Einstein, in talking to Raymond Swing, urges the immediate formation of a world government. He admits he fears the possible tyranny of such a government, but he fears much more another war. Since Britain and the United States share the atomic secret, he thinks Russia should be

asked to draw up the first constitution of the world government. Such an act, in itself, he thinks, would help much to clear away Russia's suspicions of our intentions.

THE SAME ISSUE OF THE *ATLANTIC* contains an essay by Nora Waln, "Can the Nazis Learn?" Mrs. Waln, well known as the author of *Reaching for the Stars*, is now the *Atlantic* correspondent in the American zone in Germany. She sees an outward change in the Germans but not an inner one and concludes: "I have come to feel that Naziism was only a harvest from seed which has not been destroyed by losing the war." Her feelings are much akin to those of Helen Kirkpatrick, returned *Chicago Daily News* correspondent. Miss Kirkpatrick stated in a recent lecture that she believed one of the biggest problems in the re-education of Germany was the need for re-educating the older people. The young people, she thinks, those brought up entirely on Nazi philosophy, have had their foundations so completely shattered by their defeat that it may be easier to change their thinking than that of their elders.

THE PROGRESS OF INTERGROUP EDUCATION as evidenced by the increasing number of college workshops in intercultural techniques is summarized by Leo Shapiro in the autumn *Common Ground*. He also describes some of the programs which have been successfully developed by the co-operation of workshops with teachers and community leaders. For example, the Board of Education of Dade County, Florida, evolved a plan embodying the appointment of teachers to study various systems of intercultural education and adapt them to the Miami area. Three teachers attended the Harvard workshop. One eventually produced the program now getting under way in Dade County. Several other programs in other parts of the country are also described. Shapiro will write continuing articles on the same subject in subsequent issues of the magazine.

THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION of the National Council of American Soviet

Friendship is now issuing a monthly *Bulletin*. This contains much useful information on the availability in this country of courses in Russian language and literature, exchange information from Russian schools and universities, suggestions and bibliographies for study units, and other information. According to a recent number, "Today, English is, next to Russian, the most popular and universally studied language in the Soviet Union, and American government, economics, science, as well as the history of English grammar are part of the curriculum."

THE NOVEMBER *ATLANTIC MONTHLY* carries proof of this in a brief article by Harry Weiser, who states that "a good English teacher is worth his weight in sugar in Moscow today." The demand for English-language teachers far exceeds the supply. Mr. Weiser, who himself is teaching English in the Soviet capital, describes how its study as a language throughout the Soviet Union begins with an intensive grounding in pronunciation, a course of twenty teaching hours in a nonspecialized school and up to a hundred hours in a special-language institute. The method has proved most successful in producing a speedy and correct fluency.

"JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND RUSSIA," by Samuel Flagg Bemis in the autumn *Virginia Quarterly Review*, recounts the experiences of our first ambassador to Russia. Today it is difficult for us to visualize the United States as a small nation, weak in power and radical in politics, seeking recognition by the great powers of Europe. But so we were, in 1809, when it became Adams' duty to represent us at Alexander's court. His mission laid the historical foundations for diplomatic co-operation between the two nations and prepared the way for permanent peace between Russia and the United States. Professor Bemis' article provides excellent perspective for today's news, as we anxiously read of the meetings and points of view and actions of the Big Three.

A SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGING PICTURE of the allaying of prejudice is given by

Dillon S. Myer in "Japanese-American Relocation: Final Chapter." Myer has been director of the War Relocation Authority since June, 1942, and his article appears in the autumn *Common Ground*. It describes the problems of reintegrating into American life the 110,000 Japanese-Americans whom the necessities of war caused us to exile to inland centers. Some of the evacuees have become accustomed to the centers and are reluctant to leave. Housing and meager financial resources are major problems. But one factor, which was anticipated as a problem, has turned out not to be a serious one. "The transfer of evacuee children to outside schools has so far gone forward with remarkable smoothness, with regard both to the transfer of academic credits and the social adjustments of the pupils." Since last May, instances of attempted violence against returned evacuees have almost disappeared on the West Coast, where large numbers of democratic-minded people organized to oppose the "vocal exclusionists." By June, more than 48,000 had been resettled in forty-eight states and the District of Columbia. Myer feels that, although the dictates of war necessity overrode the peacetime rights of one minority, our concern and efforts to readjust the Japanese-Americans show that "we have furnished a guarantee that the American way is to repair and make restitution."

PROBABLY ONE OF OUR BIGGEST intergroup educational problems today is the strengthening of understanding between veterans and civilians who should not be divided into two groups but who are. Two sensible and hard-hitting articles appear in recent issues of *Tomorrow*. "GI Forum" in the November number is a discussion of veteran-civilian relations by five editors of *Yank*; and "The GI's Road Back, through the Campus," by Louis T. Benezet, an Educational Services Officer with the Seventh Fleet, appeared in October. Briefly, the opinion of all five authors, who have had ample opportunity to hear and observe, is that G.I.'s want to be treated as normal

men, persons of maturity, with fair and square opportunities for employment. They do not want favors or to be handled with care. These ideas have been expressed before but have only rarely been as well documented. According to Benezet, the G.I. who returns to college—and there will be many—will go "to find out how to rejoin the harsh living outside in a way that will make the best use of his powers. This man will not want to rest and quiet his nerves so much as to feed them with new purpose. Finding that purpose, in the most direct and practical sense, constitutes the college's first postwar job."

SIDNEY HOOK, WRITING IN THE autumn *Antioch Review*, in his "Education for Vocation," would agree with Benezet; but he warns even more loudly that "vocational education conceived as job training represents the greatest threat to democratic education in our time. It is a threat to democracy because it tends to make the job-trained individual conscious only of his technological responsibility but not of his social and moral responsibilities." Both Benezet and Hook emphasize the need for schools and colleges to revolutionize their attitude toward the vocational futures of their students. Not until then will a desirable integration between the liberal and the vocational be achieved.

IN "THE VETERANS ARE THINKING," appearing in the November *English Leaflet*, Harriet L. Clark puts the same plea for integration this way: "Though we must give our young people a chance of becoming good mechanics, farmers, carpenters, welders, none of them should be deprived of the best literature that we have inherited." The letters from veterans from which she profusely quotes indicate that the writers feel the same way.

THE ROLE OF THE DOCUMENTARY film in helping to create intersectional, as well as international, understanding is predicted by Arthur L. Meyer and Sergeant

Richard Griffith in "The Shape of Films To Come," in the November *Theatre Arts Monthly*. The same potentiality is discussed by Willard Van Dyke in "Fact Films in War and Peace" in the November *Tomorrow*. Van Dyke, who has been associated with the making of many of the most important documentary films in this country, and most recently has been on the staff of the O.W.I. Bureau of Overseas Motion Pictures, gives a good description of the content and success of O.W.I. films. He is less sure that their potentiality will be adequately developed in peacetime. He points out that the O.W.I. has been disbanded, that the President has made the statement that motion pictures should be made by regular commercial producers, and that *Congress has specifically forbidden the distribution of O.W.I. films in the United States in the fear that Hollywood might object to government film production*. Who will make the documentary films?

A VISTA OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR such films is opened up by an almost casual statement in a recent bulletin from Ginling College, China. The college, which had to move several times during the advance of the Japanese, received, for showing, an O.W.I. film on life in America. More than ten thousand people, the bulletin states, tramped miles along dangerous mountain paths to see it. This film presumably is among those which, by congressional edict, residents of the United States are not permitted to see.

"THE MOVIES COME TO CHINA," BY Lee Chin-Yang, in the November *Theatre Arts*, is an amusing brief history of the Chinese film industry, the fluctuating for-

tunes of which are not unlike the gusty progress of the early Elizabethan theater.

A RECENT BULLETIN OF THE PAN American Union contains an article by Guillermo Kraft, president of the Argentine Publishers Association. Señor Kraft gives publishing figures which, if thought of in relation to the apparent Fascist tendencies in Argentina, should cause concern for their implications. Argentina is the leading publishing center for books in Spanish, and her trade has almost doubled in the last three years. In 1943, eighteen million books were printed in Argentina; in 1944, twenty-eight million. Seventy per cent of these books were exported to other Latin-American countries, including four and a half million to Mexico and more than two million to Chile. It is to be hoped that the new information service of the State Department is doing some research on this situation and perhaps thinking of the making of a few factual films.

THE NEED FOR AID FROM THE United States in replacing the books destroyed and pillaged from European libraries during the war is pointed up by information received from the British Library Association. This reveals that more than a million books were destroyed by fire in Britain alone in German bombing raids on England, most of them in municipal libraries. About fifty-four thousand children's books were burned and thousands of special collections. The University College of London lost one hundred thousand books and almost all its special collections, and the Guildhall lost twenty-eight thousand volumes, to mention the losses of only two libraries.

Books

THE COLLEGE AND TEACHER EDUCATION

If this report of the Commission on Teacher Education¹ were concerned primarily with the professional aspects of the preparation of teachers, its review for *College English* would be less appropriate. The point of view of the Commission is broadly inclusive, however; and the work done by the institutions of higher education co-operating with the study is sufficiently basic to college education in general, and the liberal arts in particular, to have significance for anyone who is concerned either with the education of teachers in its larger meaning or with developments in higher education in general.

The report summarizes and interprets a nation-wide study conducted over a period of three years. Twenty institutions co-operated, including universities, colleges of liberal arts, state teachers colleges, and two Negro colleges, selected to represent a range of pattern, conditioning factors, and even of educational philosophy. Each institution was given complete latitude in developing its own methods of procedure in the study, its own emphases, and program, the Commission maintaining an advisory relationship throughout rather than imposing any experimental plan of its own. The resulting revelation of the nature and complexity of problems involved constitutes no small part of the value of the study.

The Commission presents its report in a series of descriptive sketches, grouped around issues that emerged in a majority of institutions. While every area explored was found ultimately to concern the entire

faculty and the whole institution—a discovery that is in itself a contribution to thinking on teacher preparation—the work done in general education and in the major fields of subject matter are perhaps of greatest concern to college English faculties.

Of all the co-operating institutions, the teachers colleges gave most consideration to general education. Perhaps this is because, having sprung up "somewhat apart from the main liberal arts tradition," they are in a sense less trammelled by the past in developing programs to insure breadth and richness; and, to quote the report, they felt "some natural hesitation about taking over uncritically patterns which they had reason to believe the liberal arts people were themselves beginning to question" (p. 60).

Sharp differences of opinion on general education developed on every campus, not alone as to ways and means, but as to basic values involved. Although four general experimental plans did emerge in these colleges, less was accomplished in this area than on any other problem. The methods that succeeded for other purposes of the study "frequently ended as far as general education is concerned in bewildered frustration" (p. 61). The fact that the atmosphere was cleared of mutual suspicion, departmental isolationism, and indifference in certain of the colleges and that conflict of opinion was sufficiently resolved to permit workable plans to emerge, even though general education cuts across traditional entities and violates certain established practices, is of interest to anyone working with similar curriculum problems. The account of the methods of work by which these results were achieved is perhaps more important than the actual plans for general education that were developed.

In the colleges of liberal arts and the

¹ W. Earl Armstrong, Ernest V. Hollis, and Helen E. Davis, *The College and Teacher Education*. Prepared for the Commission on Teacher Education, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1944.

universities much attention was given to organizing the major fields of study for the particular purpose of preparing teachers. These faculties "frequently took the position that all subject matter should be related to ultimate vocational purpose, broadly conceived, and that a three- or four-year pattern might well be developed for each major occupation, in which general education, the field of concentration, and professional education were integrated from the beginning" (p. 96). Such a position challenges the common distinction between lower and upper division. It does not, these educators insist, mean abandoning general or liberal education for a narrow vocationalism. "In fact, their foremost aim is to assure balanced preparation for teachers who must eventually function as generalists more than specialists."

The thinking at this point is in some senses revolutionary, and the plans developed in two of the co-operating institutions and, under financing of the commission, at Harvard are sufficiently challenging to call for careful attention to this section of the report. In each instance described, the project was carried out jointly by professors of traditional subject matter and specialists in education with a resultant overcoming of what the Harvard committee designates as "the covert hostility" between these groups. That firsthand contacts with public schools and public-school teachers was made the common point of departure may well account for the subsequent meeting of minds and joint planning.

It is not possible within the limits of this review to comment upon work done with respect to student personnel, or upon the new patterns of professional education (in college and after graduation) that were a part of this study. Throughout these, as in the two issues briefly discussed here, there runs the tendency toward an organic approach, integration of previously isolated areas, removal of departmental barriers, and a sense of institutional unity as essential in any basic educational reorganization, however specialized the purpose may

at first seem to be. A concluding statement of the report presents the point of view succinctly: "We have insisted that responsibility for teacher education rests with the institution as a whole: it cannot be taken care of adequately by a department or school of education alone."

The effect of this point of view, once adopted as a working principle, must inevitably be as broad in its consequences in any college or university as in the institutions described. The sources of opposition are frankly analyzed (pp. 259-63) and are well worth the weighing by anyone operating within the structure of collegiate life, whether or not as part of a curriculum committee. Since wholeness of action such as this will undoubtedly be required in aspects of education besides that of preparing teachers, the methods of work, the obstacles and hindrances encountered, and the nature of the achievement described in this report should have even wider value than for the particular problem to which it is addressed.

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SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

MODERN GRAMMAR AT WORK

There has long been need of an American grammar at the freshman level which treats syntax as living language and finds its authority in good current usage rather than in arbitrary rules of "correctness." *Modern Grammar at Work*¹ aims at fulfilling this need. In her Preface the author announces a double purpose: "to present a series of clear grammatical statements based on actual usage" and "to help the student to apply the underlying principles of grammar and usage in his own linguistic expression."

Actually, the book is more ambitious. It is a text for freshman composition which limits itself to the sentence, but not to the grammar of the sentence. Part I, which gives its title to the whole text, considers effective

¹Bertha M. Watts, *Modern Grammar at Work*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1944. Pp. xxiii+432. \$2.00.

expression as well as standard usage. It takes up such rhetorical principles as sentence unity and coherence, subordination, parallelism, variety of sentence structure. It discusses such matters of style as the value of specific, concrete nouns and verbs and the effective use of modifiers. In addition, Part II, entitled "Some Matters of Form and Style," has chapters on punctuation, spelling, idiom, vocabulary, and style.

The strength of the text, however, lies in the way it makes grammar a living subject, the way it leads the student to see the why, as well as the how, in the construction of sentences. Grammar is *taught*, not presented as reference material. Nothing is taken for granted. The first three chapters are an excellent introduction to grammar as "usage consecrated by custom." In the chapters which follow, nouns, pronouns, verbs, modifiers, and connectives are explained and classified, followed in each instance by a chapter which presents in nondogmatic fashion their use in standard English. Each chapter ends with a "Student Forum," which includes exercises as well as topics for discussion.

Rhetoric and style are treated much less thoroughly than grammar. Subordination

and parallelism are dismissed with only the briefest mention; sentence emphasis is not discussed aside from word order; the discussion of modifiers is limited almost entirely to single-word modifiers. Punctuation is handled in the fashion of the conservative handbook, with little regard for divided usage. Also, Professor Watts ignores diagramming, which many teachers rely upon heavily in teaching syntax.

A more serious omission, however, is sufficient illustrative examples drawn from modern expository prose. Professor Watts deplores "school-ma'am" English, and yet too many of her illustrations are stilted, copybook sentences. Sentences like *Little foreign children play here in the shade; Father, I have brought you a book to read; and That he is honest is apparent to all* tend to frighten the student away from good grammar rather than attract him to it. But, despite these defects, the text should prove welcome to those teachers both in high school and in college who want to give their students a thorough grounding in modern grammar without resorting to the deadening drill of workbooks.

RALPH H. SINGLETON

OBERLIN COLLEGE

In Brief Review

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

Focus. By ARTHUR MILLER. Reynal. \$2.50.

The story of a rather smug young man who mildly considered himself anti-Semitic. He put on glasses, and at first sight everybody, even his employers and neighbors, believed him to be Jewish. Racial prejudice had a very different meaning then.

Gold in the Streets. By MARY VARDOLAKIS. Dodd. \$2.50.

These immigrants from their ancestral farms in Crete become Americanized citizens in a Massachusetts mill town. A colorful story of the customs and ambitions of a minority, bewildered but pleased by a new pattern of life. Winner of the Intercollegiate Literary Fellowship Award.

Russian Fairy Tales. Translated by NORBERT GUTTERMAN. Pantheon. \$7.50.

First inclusive edition in English of Russian folk tales. A hundred beautiful illustrations, with thirty-two pages in color.

Arch of Triumph. By ERICH MARIA REMARQUE. Appleton. \$3.00.

Similar to *Flotsam*. The story of a German refugee doctor in Paris—sent to a concentration camp when war begins. Long, philosophical.

The Manatee. By NANCY BRUFF. Dutton. \$2.50.

Laid in Nantucket, 1830-50. The story of a whaling captain, a monster who hated surpassing well, and his vessel the "Manatee." The author is descended from old Nantucket families. Jabez, the captain, is probably somebody's real ancestor. Lusty, sexy—perhaps a popular movie some day.

The Human Life of Jesus. By JOHN ERSKINE. Morrow. \$3.00.

Professor Erskine does not disregard the divine side of Jesus' life. "Like all those whose humanity He shared, He learned His destiny by living it." Professor Erskine quotes at length from the Gospels, making scholarly commentaries on the Scripture quoted. Those on the Temptation and the Lord's Prayer are impressive.

Most Secret. By NEVIL SHUTE. Morrow. \$2.50.

The story of four British army and navy officers who, with citizens, man a seventy-foot Breton fishing boat equipped with an oversized flame-thrower and make three attacks upon the Germans on the Breton Coast. The manuscript was held up by the British Admiralty for months.

Making of Nazis. By HEINRICH MANN. Creative Press. \$2.75.

In 1914 *The Patrioteer* by Heinrich Mann gave a prophetic picture of the Hitler followers of today which many critics called exaggerated and distorted. Today, Mann's Dietrich Hessling, brutal ruthless subject of His Majesty William II, is recognized as the Nazi who followed Hitler as long as the loot came in—then claimed to be an innocent bystander and a "good German." *The Patrioteer*, long out of print, now republished as *Little Superman*, is a knowing picture of the German ready to co-operate(?) with his liberators—until. . . .

The Gauntlet. By JAMES STREET. Doubleday. \$2.75.

By the author of *Tap Roots*. London Wingo, a young married theological student, is "called" to a small town in Missouri. Ambitious and upright, he and his wife strive for righteousness and spiritual integrity. The deacons and many of the women expect the minister and the minister's wife to conform to their way of life and their ideas. The story is of the struggle the Wingos make and of the growth of their faith.

Undertow. By HOWARD MAIER. Doubleday. \$2.50.

For Russ Davis, thirty-two, the loneliness and standards of army life are unbearable! He feels frustrated and unimportant. That Russ Davis' frustration may not be entirely a result of the army life is possible. There have been other books upon this subject since World War I.

Days and Nights. By KONSTANTINE SIMONOV. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

A modern factual Russian novel. Nonpolitical. For seventy days and nights Captain Saburov, with inadequate arms, forces, and supplies, held Stalin-grad, the Germans in control of half the town. Portraits of men in battle are superb, as is the development of the young officer. It happens to be Russian, but it might be any battle, any boys; it is human. And there is a girl, too.

Teresa, or Her Demon Lover. By AUSTIN K. GRAY. Scribner. \$3.00.

One lonely evening in 1819 in Genoa Byron met the bride of an Italian nobleman and slipped a note into her hand. A fresh approach to the life of Byron. Painstaking research makes this a fascinating biography.

Black Metropolis. By CLAIR DRAKE and HORACE CAYTON. Introduction by RICHARD WRIGHT. Harcourt. \$5.00.

The "black metropolis" is a settlement of 300,000 Negroes in Chicago, but except for its size it might be in any northern city. The authors present the struggle for living that confronts us all, with racial discriminations and housing problems; the pressure outward of this large group of people, and also the inner problems—the cross-currents of amusements, gambling, religions, education, clubs, lodges, and associations—not forgetting those people who always prey upon the weaker and unfortunate. Politics, professions, and successful individuals all play a part. Food for much thought.

The Bostonians. By HENRY JAMES. Dial. \$3.00.

To satisfy the renewed interest in Henry James, this novel of American life, published in 1886, is reprinted.

Daisy Kenyon. By ELIZABETH JANEWAY. Doubleday. \$2.50.

The author of *The Walsh Girls* has sold her new story to the movies. A triangle, an exciting and sexy story of a career woman and her love life.

Meet Your Ancestors: A Biography of Primitive Man. By ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS. Viking. \$3.00.

Vivid impressions of excavations and discoveries of fossil men in the last twenty years. New links found in China and the Gobi Desert, and the conditions under which they are excavated. Amazing giant teeth have been found in Java—and two kinds of manlike apes in South Africa.

Food or Famine. By WARD SHEPARD. Macmillan. \$3.00.

Erosion—the washing of top soil into the sea—is fast becoming a national interest. Few readers will agree wholeheartedly with any writer, but it is heartening to know that the problem is recognized as real.

What the Informed Citizen Needs To Know. Edited by BRUCE BLIVEN and A. G. MEZERIK. Duell, Sloan. \$3.00.

Foreword: "The Bomb and the Future." A discussion of the great issues, national and international, which America and the world face today. A few of the questions discussed are "The United States Charter," by Edward R. Stettinius; "Our Relations with Russia," by William L. Blatt; "Relief and Rehabilitation," by Senator E. D. Thomas; "Jobs for All," by Henry A. Wallace; "The Threat of Inflation," by Chester A. Bowles; "Health Is Every-

body's Business," by Surgeon-General Thomas Par-
ran; "The Family-Size Farm," by J. G. Patton; and
"Veterans: The Twelve-Million-Man Question," by
Charles B. Bolt.

The Question of Henry James. Edited by FREDERICK
W. DUPEE. Holt. \$3.75.

Stories and novels by James are again available,
and an old and a new audience are enthusiastic about
his great variety of methods and approaches. The
editor has selected twenty-five critical essays of di-
vergent opinions, dealing with James's writing as a
whole. These essays are by such critics as W. D.
Howells, Joseph Conrad, Stuart P. Sherman, T. S.
Eliot, Edmund Wilson, Stephen Spender, and André
Gide. Introduction and Bibliography by the editor.

Pay Dirt: Farming and Gardening with Composts. By
J. I. RODALE. Duan-Adair. \$3.00.

Experts interested in food and soil agree that a
revolution in farming and gardening is in progress
now. The use of humus, a return of vegetable and
animal waste to the soil, is a law of nature. Compost,
as compared to artificial fertilizers, is freely discussed
by Mr. Rodale, as are erosion, sprays and pests, vita-
mins, the nutritive value of vegetables as related to
the soil in which they grow, eggs and milk and their
quality in relation to the food provided for hens and
cows.

United Nations Primer. By SIGRID ARNE. Farrar.

Miss Arne, who has for years written Associated
Press explanations of abstruse news, has avoided
propaganda in explaining the meaning and impor-
tance of the fifteen conferences which laid the founda-
tion for the United Nations Charter: what these
conferences were to do, what they did, and how they
may affect the future peace of the world. The full
texts of conference documents are included.

The City of Flint Grows Up. By CARL CROW. Harper.
\$3.00.

An American town through four colorful epochs:
fur-trapping, lumbering, carriage manufacturing,
and automobiles—the success story of an American
community. Flint is symbolic of a people who con-
quer a wilderness and develop big industries. The
Buick enterprise is held largely responsible for the
change, but, had it not been Buick, it would have
been something else—the American way.

Judd Rankin's Daughter. By SUSAN GLASPELL. Lip-
pincott. \$2.50.

Frances Mitchell sought constantly for a "de-
sign for living," first from a grand old woman, Cou-
sin Adah, with lesser hope from her father, and later
from and for her soldier son. Frances' quest and that
of her son is eventually solved by her father—but
how is not quite plain to the reader.

Time Remembered. By LAURIE HILLYER. Macmillan.
\$2.00.

The story of a home in which parents are wise and
children are growing up (1932-42). Intimate, trivial,
and dramatic family affairs, with the inevitable
changes and the shadow of war.

The Friendly Persuasion. By JESSAMYN WEST. Har-
court. \$2.50.

The story of a Quaker family in nineteenth-cen-
tury Indiana. Jess Birdwell loved a fast horse and his
demure wife, who was a Quaker minister but hu-
man. Amusing and subtle, as was the Birdwell
family.

Somewhat Angels. By DAVID CORNEL DE JONG. Rey-
nal. \$2.50.

A satirical, rancorous study of war wives. Mrs.
Brant, the mother-in-law, keeps the family together
to some extent and makes an effort to help the
younger women adjust themselves to unpleasant
situations.

The Shenandoah. By JULIA DAVIS. Farrar. \$2.50.

The latest volume of the fine "Rivers of Ameri-
ca" series. "The Valley of the Shenandoah, a fair
land, long in memories and rich in peace." The story
of "the unrecorded past," a lengthy history of Indian
occupation and the Revolutionary and Civil wars,
with suggestions for tours of the valley. The post-
script tells an interesting story of how the valley was
saved by the people when Congress authorized the
War Department to plan flood control which would
have ruined both river and valley.

A Man against Time: An Heroic Dream. By WIL-
LIAM ELLERY LEONARD. Appleton. \$2.00.

The jacket furnishes an interesting short biog-
raphy of the author. William Rose Benét says: "It
is a service to Leonard's memory and to the cause of
American Poetry to have published this book." A
love poem written in passionate sonnets.

The Short Stories of Henry James. Selected by CLIF-
TON FADIMAN. Random House. \$3.00.

Fadiman suggests that we return to Henry James
because he is subtle, that unmined riches lie in hid-
den veins. James is near us—he is modern. He has
the fascination of a "devious mind whose message is
neither slight nor immediate." Besides the Introduc-
tion, a note on each story.

Masterpieces in Color. By E. BRYAN HOLME. Ameri-
can Studio Books. At the Metropolitan Museum
of Art in New York. \$5.75.

Selections from different schools, fifteenth to
nineteenth centuries. The Introduction, by Harry B.
Wehle, includes brief notes based on articles appear-
ing in monthly bulletins of the Museum. The pur-
pose of these reproductions is to serve as "helpful re-
minders" of the originals for those who have seen
them and as a colorful stimulation to those who have
not seen them and to secure wider public interest in
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Ploughman of the Moon. By ROBERT SERVICE. Dodd. \$3.50.

Service tells the story of his childhood in Scotland and his wanderings in Mexico, Canada, and United States. Amusing and delightful.

French Fairy Tales. By CHARLES PERRAULT. Didier. \$1.50.

A handsome edition with Doré illustrations.

Many Long Years Ago. By OGDEN NASH. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

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The Theatre Book of the Year, 1944-45. By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN. Knopf. \$1.00.

The third successful survey of the New York theater and its outstanding productions.

A Treasury of Horse Stories. Selected by MARGARET CABELL SELF. A. S. Barnes. \$3.75

An anthology of stories and poems about horses, by Steinbeck, Kipling, and others. Popular.

The Life of the Heart; George Sand and Her Times. By FRANCES WINWAR. Morrow. \$3.50.

The author of several fine biographies portrays George Sand and her writings in relation to her times. Dazzling.

Benjamin Franklin: A Biography. By CARL VAN DOREN. New ed. Viking. \$5.00.

A great biography, re-issued complete.

Benjamin Franklin's Autobiographical Writings. Edited by CARL VAN DOREN. Viking. \$5.00.

Mr. Van Doren has added to Franklin's famous *Autobiography* his autobiographical letters and writings, presenting Franklin's self-portrait.

South by Thunderbird. By HUDSON STRODE. Harcourt. \$3.50.

This out-of-print popular book on South America has been brought up to date and republished. Illustrated.

A Nation of Nations. By LOUIS ADAMIC. Harper. \$3.50.

Adamic disapproves of writers and historians regarding the United States as an Anglo-Saxon country. A chapter each is devoted to the immigrant and American-born Italians, Spanish, Germans, Irish, Negroes, Swedish, etc., whom he calls "Americans from Italy," etc. The part played by these citizens of foreign birth or ancestry, the eminent men and women who have sprung from them, and their patriotism make a creditable showing for all. Illustrated with many photographs. It is Adamic's plan

to issue a second volume treating of the smaller nations and the citizens they have contributed to America.

America's Stake in Britain's Future. By GEORGE SOULE. Viking. \$2.75.

A controversial subject: blood is thicker—common language—hands across the sea. While Soule discounts many of our platitudes and much propaganda, he does point out the need for co-operation between Britain and United States. Some of his political implications are disturbing. He discusses at length the problems facing Great Britain—problems which she cannot solve irrespective of the result and actions of the rest of the world, particularly of the United States. Britain, he admits, hopes that there will be no depression and idle men in the United States.

Prater Violet. By CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD. Random House. \$2.00.

In Vienna before World War I, a studio called Imperial Bulldog Pictures is making a commercial movie. There are a girl selling violets and a crown prince in disguise. A sick world asks of what use are living, caring, and the answer is sought and found in the individual. Have we "spread our feelings too thin"? Have we "cared enough" about something, about everything? Beautifully written, subtle in form and style.

Essay on Rime. By KARL SHAPIRO. Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.00.

Written by a sergeant in the Medical Corps while on active duty in the Pacific. Far from books and any possibility of research, he wrote this essay discussing "rime" and its connotations. With only his memory of the pronouncements of other critics, he tells of his own reactions and what he thinks and believes as a poet. He finds guides in the "discipline" of Milton and the "rhythmical idiom" of Joyce. Contemporary poets who have pleased him are Eliot, Hart Crane, and Auden.

The Atomic Age Opens. Prepared by the EDITORS OF POCKET BOOKS. Pocket Books, Inc. Pp. 252. \$0.25.

Between August 6 and September 3 this book was edited, printed, and distributed to dealers. Labeled on the backbone "Anthology," it is so well worked into a continuous narrative and explanation that the casual reader at first supposes it a single work. Thoroughly informative, apparently reliable, written for the layman.

FOR THE TEACHER

Ben Jonson, Poet. By GEORGE BURKE JOHNSTON. Columbia University Press. Pp. 175. \$2.00.

A pioneer full-length critical work on the non-dramatic poems of Ben Jonson. Principal emphasis

is on the native English and medieval traditions "as an antidote to the categorical label of 'classicism.'"

The Trollopes. By LUCY POATE and RICHARD POATE STEBBINS. Columbia University Press. Pp. 394. \$4.00.

A biography of the famous writing family: Anthony, the novelist; his mother, Frances, author of *Domestic Manners of the Americans*; and his brother, Thomas, a historian. Vivid, swift-moving, based on thorough research.

Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language. "Publications of the English Language Institute," No. 1. By CHARLES C. FRIES. University of Michigan Press. Pp. 153.

Explains in nontechnical language the linguistic approach employed by the English Language Institute in preparing new materials to be used in intensive courses in English for those of foreign speech. In general, the work of the Institute has been "an attempt to interpret, in a practical way for teaching, the principles of modern linguistic science and to use the results of scientific linguistic research."

The Intonation of American English. By KENNETH L. PIKE. "University of Michigan Publications: Linguistics," Vol. I. University of Michigan Press. Pp. 200.

A study of the English intonation system in relation to the structural systems of stress, pause, and rhythm.

How They Were Staged. Edited by EARL W. BLANK. Cincinnati: National Thespian Society. Pp. 64.

A practical guide to the staging of forty-two plays, with instructions as to their suitability, plot, direction, stagecraft, and educational value. Planned for directors and teachers in high schools, colleges, and community theaters.

The American Language: Supplement One. By H. L. MENCKEN. Knopf. Pp. 739. \$5.00.

The indefatigable collector of information concerning the language of America had amassed so much material that supplements to the original work rather than a revision and further extension of the fourth edition seemed necessary. This supplement follows the organization of the first six chapters of the original and is briefly connected with it but can easily be read independently. *Supplement Two* will parallel the remaining chapters. The emphasis upon the differences between English and American continues; and, as Mencken admits, much of the material still needs better digestion.

FOR THE STUDENT

Understanding Drama. By CLEANTH BROOKS and ROBERT B. HEILMAN. Holt. Pp. 515. \$2.25.

A manual for reading drama with appreciation and understanding. Plays arranged in a scale of ascending difficulty. Comments and questions at end of each act. Supplementary material on problems of the dramatist and history of the drama. Study exercises, full glossary, and index.

A Refresher in College Composition. By MABEL E. STRONG. Longmans, Green. Pp. 261. \$2.25.

A textbook by a teacher who understands the minds and habits of her students and has executed a workbook aimed straight at them. Planned especially for college freshmen and former servicemen returning to college who need some review of spelling, grammar, and punctuation but whose interest will neither be challenged nor satisfied by a sixth-grade repeater course. Basic methods used are the historical approach to a living, changing language; exercises based on problems, not lessons; reasonable discussions answering the question "Why?" and the use of actual student writing.

Effective Speech Notebook. Edited by ROBERT T. OLIVER. Syracuse University Press. \$0.75.

Developed co-operatively by eight successful teachers of speech. Makes possible a continuing record of progress. Correlates speech and written work.

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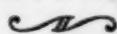
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ON GOING TO COLLEGE

A Symposium

For the returning veteran and the student fresh from secondary school alike, the bewildering vista of a liberal education raises many questions. They want to know, reasonably enough, 'Why should I study Greek, or physics, or music, or economics? What is the ultimate gain to me? What part has this subject in a liberal education? What has been the experience of men and women in this field? Would they do it again?' In answer to to questions like these, *On Going to College* presents in each of thirteen essays a distinguished professor's informal *apologia* for his own particular branch of learning. The result is a book which serves as an ideal background for the orientation course.

The contributors are: E. K. Rand (Classics); J. B. Munn (Literature); H. C. Lancaster (Modern Languages); Wallace Notestein (History); R. B. MacIver (The Social Sciences); A. H. Compton (The Natural Sciences); J. F. Dashiell (Psychology); Irwin Edman (Philosophy); C. F. Wishart (Religion); H. A. Wichelns (Public Speaking and Drama); Clarence Ward (The Fine Arts); R. D. Welch (Music); C. B. Tinker (The Library).

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